

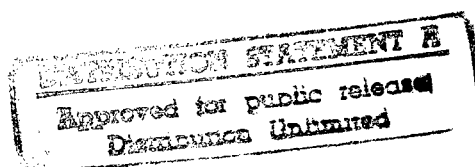
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Near East & South Asia

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Near East & South Asia

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22 April 1991

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Arab States' Positions on Accepting Kuwaiti Gazans

91AE0336B Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
26 Feb 91 p 2

[Article by P.V. Vivekanand: "Gazan Holding Jordanian Document Off to Libya"]

[Text] Amman—A Palestinian from Gaza carrying a Jordanian-issued laissez passer flew to Tripoli Monday in what was seen as the first watershed case of acceptance by Libya of Palestinians stranded in Kuwait as a result of non-recognition of travel documents in the wake of the crisis in the Gulf.

The Gazan, identified as Adil Ibrahim 'Abduh 'Isawi, flew to the Libyan capital on a Royal Jordanian (RJ) flight early Monday, sources said. The passage was arranged by an international relief agency in charge of repatriating evacuees from Iraq and Kuwait following the Gulf crisis.

The Gazan originally held an Egyptian laissez passer, issued to him on the basis that all Gazans were the responsibility of Egypt, which controlled the Gaza strip until it was occupied by Israel in 1967. He arrived in Jordan from Kuwait in the third week of November and travelled to Egypt on his way home to the strip, but was denied entry by the Egyptian authorities, who also seized the laissez passer and expelled him back to Jordan, the sources said.

Egypt maintains that it would allow holders of such documents to enter its territory only with prior security permission. Israeli regulations stipulate that every Palestinian leaving the West Bank or Gaza return using the route by which they left: Egypt's al-'Arish in the Sinai in the case of Gazans holding Egyptian documents.

Between 45,000 to 60,000 Gazans are believed to be stranded in Kuwait as a result of the Egyptian and Israeli positions. Jordanian officials confirmed that in the absence of any guarantee of entry to Egypt they had to turn away some Gazans who wanted to enter the Kingdom on their way home through Egypt.

Meanwhile, doubts remained on what arrangement or condition was attached to the Libyan offer. Diplomatic sources and international relief agencies said they doubted Libya was willing to grant nationality to the stranded Palestinians and other Arabs which it is offering to accept. At the same time, they also noted that Libya stood in need of skilled personnel to accelerate its pace of development.

"Almost every Palestinian in Kuwait is skilled in one way or another," noted a diplomat pointing out that the Palestinian community in the emirate is credited with playing a key role in developing the infrastructure of the country.

But the support that the Palestinians extended to Iraq in the Gulf crisis has burned bridges and many Palestinians have voiced fears for their safety if the toppled emiri regime were to be reinstalled in Kuwait.

Analysts did not expect Libya to step into the explosive minefield of "absorbing" the Gazans as Libyan nationals and set a precedent which would contribute to Israel's theory that there is no place for a Palestinian state in Palestine.

No official was available at the Libyan embassy to comment on the affair Monday, but an embassy source has confirmed without elaboration his country's offer to accept Arabs stranded in Kuwait.

However, another diplomatic source said Tripoli was attaching no visa restrictions to holders of Arab laissez passer, including Gazans holding Egyptian documents.

"If the Libyans were being choosy about the people it would allow in they could have attached a visa condition, which offers the visa issuing authority a chance to screen the applicants," noted an international relief official. "In the absence of such a condition, it is obvious that Libya is offering the same kind of arrangement that Kuwait was offering: a place to work and reside pending the resolution of the Palestinian problem."

Abu-al'Abbas Interviewed on Zionism, U.S.

91AE0305A Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL
in English 3 Mar 91 p 9

[Interview with Abu-al'Abbas, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in Baghdad 22 February; first paragraph is KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL introduction]

[Text] Baghdad, March 2 (KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL)—The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) leader Muhammad 'Abbas, popularly known as Abu-al'Abbas, was kind enough to host KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL's correspondent in Baghdad at his home on Friday, Feb. 22, Mr. 'Abbas who is also a member of the Palestine National Council Executive Council discussed the impact of the current Persian Gulf crises on the fate of the Palestinians.

Question: What has happened to the Palestinians since the Persian Gulf crisis began? It has certainly been a very difficult set of circumstances.

Abu-al-'Abbas: We consider all the issues of the region as a package. We cannot mechanically divide these questions. The Zionist enemy is on Palestinian land. Their aim is not simply against the Palestinians, rather they represent aggression against the whole Arab nation. Before the issue of Aug. 2, the Palestinian destiny was facing a real crisis. The gamble for a political solution was a failure because of the inflexible stand of American imperialism and the continuation of Zionist fascism. It is well known that the American administration had halted

U.S.-Palestinian negotiations after the sea-borne operation (April 90). The ending of those talks revealed the failure of a political solution, as did the escalation of the killing of our people.

The August issue came at a very critical and complicated time. The events of August made extremely clear the linkage of all the big questions in the region. It is but natural and logical that the Palestinians were in opposition to the U.S. aggression considering that the main enemies of the Palestinian people are America, Israel and their agents. When it was at last clear the Palestinian people were standing in the anti-American front, which means with Iraq.

This position against Zionism and imperialism angered the two in addition to the reactionary Arab countries who all escalated their aggression against the Palestinian people. The Arabs cut off funds to the Palestinian people and finally made it certain that they were against the rights of the Palestinian people. We are fully confident that all the issues of the area are closely linked together. We are also sure that events have made clear the lines of the Arab and Muslim struggle against the Americans and Israelis. This is most important and the struggle will continue until we secure our natural right to liberate Palestine, liberate people of the whole area and defeat the Zionist enemy in the region.

Question: What has been happening in the occupied territories since the war started?

Answer: As soon as the aggression started against Iraq, and as a consequence of the positive stance of our people in Palestine towards the crisis, the Zionist leadership put into force a policy of house arrest and blockaded our people as if they are prisoners. This took a long time to enforce which naturally created heavy losses among our people in the humanitarian, economic and other spheres of life.

The Zionists also escalated physical aggression against our people, which resulted in many civilian casualties women, children and men who simply wanted to go out of their homes and attend to their routine daily needs. It was enough for a man to leave his home to be shot. One woman in a house-dress was gunned down. The enemy has been increasingly aggressive. Recently the strict house detention has been somewhat relaxed in order that some workers resume their jobs. Our people have not responded with any enthusiasm and very few have returned to their jobs.

To the extent that people were given freedom of movement, they took to the streets in solidarity with Iraq. Some came out to strike the enemy especially in Gaza and Jineen. With the escalation of the intifada, the enemy of course concentrated on confining people to their homes. There are daily activities against the Zionist enemy but the dimensions of the blockade and restrictive orders is very severe and harms our people [as published]. But the Palestinians are accustomed to such difficulties.

Israel, the Americans and some Arabs are attempting to divide the positive Palestinian attitude and they are searching for some Palestinian personalities to cooperate and negotiate with on the Palestinian question. They are at the same time looking for alternatives to the PLO in coordination with the backward Arab regimes. The Saudis especially, with the help of the Egyptians, are trying to find means to attract people inside our territory under these difficult circumstances. They have failed completely. The Palestinian people know well who are their friends. They know clearly the Saudi and Egyptian rulers are just American tools in the region, serving Israel's purposes in the area. We believe that such trials will be continuous and appear under different guises.

[Boxed item] In fact there is a visual change in the area. One of those changes is the presence of yourself, as an Iranian journalist, in Iraq. These changes will continue in a variety of ways. Clearly there are two positions at present. One is a front led by America which is widely known. The other one which is being slowly but solidly formed represents freedom, liberation, and an attempt to determine the future of the region and fulfill the aspirations of its people. The consolidation of this front will result in new political changes in the regimes and the priorities of the people of the region. What is going on will lead to bigger events which will have a broad impact worldwide. [end boxed item]

Question: The Jews from Russia continue to come into Israel. The wealthy Arabs have withdrawn their support for the Palestinians. The Palestinian cause seems to be in its most critical situation in 24 years. Your comments please.

Answer: In a battle situation everything is expected. Even if the PLO had taken a wrong position and sided with the Saudis, nothing would be changed. America is the one who decides the political line along with the West. They consider Israel one of the most important elements of their interests in the area. The wide support from the West and America for Zionism is not new though it has been hidden in many respects. Still the support has been continuous.

The official attitude of the Americans towards Israel is decided by the Americans themselves and the American and Zionist interests in the area which are in contradiction with our national and pan-Arab interests. Even if the West has taken one step forward, that step was not very positive or serious in supporting our cause. The Americans aim was to push our efforts backwards which has been very clear in the last two years.

In fact the struggle is not between the Palestinians and the Israelis inside the occupied territories, rather the struggle is between the Arab and Muslim nation against the West which is constantly mobilizing means with the view to have full control of our region and wealth and to

prevent any Arab or Islamic uprising capable of protecting the rights of the people of the area, in contradiction to the wishes of the Americans and westerners in the region.

The Israelis presence in Palestine is a very clear instrument of the Americans and the West's mobilization. It is a bridge for these powers to make ever larger penetrations into our region to gain their objectives and to continue their animus towards us.

We cannot divide the Palestinian issue from all the problems of the region which at any rate overlap, with the solutions to one affecting the realities of the other. In the current situation the West is looking for new arrangements, or as they call it a "new world order," thereby fulfilling the needs of the Americans and the West in our region for a long time to come. The outcome can be realized clearly from the results of our struggle in the region.

Will they be successful in forming their new order as they say or will the people of the area create their own equations? This is the basic question.

Question: The Soviet proposal on the Persian Gulf crisis has been accepted by Iraq which includes an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait but does not mention anything about Palestine. What role will the Soviets play in the outcome of the crisis? Is the Soviet proposal sufficient to stop a U.S. ground attack against Iraq?

Answer: In fact the global role of the Soviet Union needs a fresh reassessment, especially with regard to the new policies. Until now however, one cannot make a final conclusion as to what is the new position of the Soviet Union. Will the Soviet role be very effective in current events which could stop the American aggression? Will the Soviet Union play clear role in the Palestinian question? These unknowns will be answered within the coming days.

It could be that the Soviet role is about to be clarified two years after it was made public at the Malta summit. We see that the American administration with a very aggressive intention has clearly stated its aims in the area. I personally don't believe the Americans are ready to accept a cease-fire within the context of the Soviet initiative.

Is the Soviet Union ready to put a stop to the American demand to go on with the war? If it becomes clear that the Soviet Union is really helping to stop this war, it means they are playing an important role. If not, it means they are supporting the Americans.

Question: No matter what happens in the Persian Gulf, all the ruling families in the region will never be quite the same. What is the future of the oil shaykhs?

Answer: In fact there is a visual change in the area. One of those changes is the presence of yourself, as an Iranian, journalist, in Iraq. These changes will continue in a variety of ways. Clearly there are two positions at

present. One is a front led by America which is widely known. The other one which is being slowly but solidly formed represents freedom, liberation, and an attempt to determine the future of the region and fulfill the aspirations of its people. The consolidation of this front will result in new political changes in the regimes and the priorities of the people of the region. What is going on will lead to bigger events which will have a broad impact worldwide.

It is not easy to halt such changes. These changes are not dependent on the current situation in the region. The region will never be the same and the coming transformation will be to the benefit of the man in this area.

Hamas Said Operating Branches in U.S., Europe

*TA11041745A Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ
in Hebrew 11 Apr 91 p 1*

[Text] The Hamas organization is operating many branches in the United States, Europe, and Jordan, without the authorities in these countries doing anything to stop them. One of Hamas' leaders, Shaykh Jamil Hammami of East Jerusalem, a former preacher on the Temple Mount who was imprisoned for two years in Israel, recently visited the United States and attended the third Hamas conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

Also participating in the conference was Dr. Mahmud al-Azhar from the Gaza Strip who was in administrative detention for three months on suspicion of being a member of Hamas and Dr. Khalil Kawkah who was deported from the territories at the start of the intifadah and is considered one of Hamas' international leaders. These details are revealed in a film, to be aired today, titled "Hamas 91," by the Arabic department television correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem.

The film shows that Hamas operates unhindered in the United States, Germany, and Britain. In Germany, the movement even publishes official newspapers containing a lot of inciting material. The official Hamas organ, FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH, is published in Great Britain.

Following the detention of the movement's leader in the territories, Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the movement's headquarters were transferred to Jordan with the knowledge of the authorities in Amman. Hamas activists are sent from Jordan to carry out attacks in Israel. On 11 March, IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers killed six of the movement's members who tried to infiltrate across the Jordanian border and carry out an attack near Tirat Tzvi in the Jordan valley.

According to the film's makers, the Muslim Brotherhood operates in Jordan as a religious movement with representatives in the parliament and in the cabinet. Nevertheless, undercover they operate a secret network which carries out subversive operations in Jordan.

Centrist Stream of PLO Reportedly Becoming More Radical*WA11041745A Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ
in Hebrew 11 Apr 91 p 3*

[Excerpt] Menahem Klein, a researcher at the Hebrew University's Truman Institute, has said that: "Since the middle of the second year of the intifadah, when the Palestinian uprising encountered serious problems, the PLO's centrist stream has become more radical. In the beginning stages, when the uprising was succeeding, it strengthened the centrist stream's claims that the Palestinians must look out for themselves. But when the uprising was slowed down, the search for outside help began and was found in the person of Saddam Husayn, even before the invasion of Kuwait."

"Since the middle of 1989, the position of the centrist stream has become more and more dichotomous and fluctuated between pragmatism and radicalism. The PLO's left-wing bodies and its centrist stream drew closer as a result of the difficulties in progressing towards independence, and in the end, despite the PLO's weakening position in the international arena, it grew stronger from within."

These things were said yesterday at a Truman Institute seminar on the intifadah. Mati Steinberg devoted his lecture at the conference to the topic of "Hamas—Between Religious Obligation and Reality." According to him, the internal tension in the organization is between the international religious mission and the national-Palestinian mission. Hamas, Steinberg says, sees in the struggle for Palestine, a fierce religious struggle between Islam and "Allah's enemies." In Hamas' opinion, Israel's enemies are motivated by religious doctrine, even if they are led by secular leaders. Hamas rejects the PLO's claims that it is a political struggle and is campaigning bitterly against this position. Hamas is interested in liberating Palestine not only from the Jews, but also from the secular Muslims in the PLO. Hamas sees the Jews as the barrier to Islamic fulfillment and therefore, a war to annihilate them must be fought; Steinberg clarifies by adding, "alongside the Islamic call for sacrifice, Islam also calls for "sabr"—patience and endurance as opposed to banging heads against the wall to no end. But the suffering is not an excuse for giving up rights, as Shaykh Yasin said." [passage omitted]

ALGERIA**RCD Takes Stand Against Capital Punishment***91P40230A Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic 25 Mar 91 p 5*

[Text] Algiers, APS—In a statement issued yesterday, the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD] affirmed that it is fighting to abolish capital punishment, allowing Algeria to rise to a new social level of human rights that will distinguish the third millennium.

The RCD [said that it] feels that the death sentence is a remnant of the fundamentalist ideology and judges it to be an overly harsh, inhumane, immoral punishment unacceptable to the RCD and incompatible with human dignity.

The RCD added that the death sentence given to four defendants in the Bank Exterieur d'Algerie case reminds us that our legal system still supports capital punishment, which time has left behind and most free societies have done away with.

EGYPT**Labor Force Loss in Gulf Amounts to \$23 Billion***91P40219A Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 1 Apr 91 p 6*

[Text] The Ministry of Manpower and Training has announced that the losses which befell the Egyptian labor force in Kuwait and Iraq totalled about \$23 billion, of which, in Kuwait, \$1.5 billion were in wages, \$15.743 billion were in stocks and goods of material value, \$3.391 billion were in end-of-service bonuses and, in Iraq, \$2.2 billion were in wages.

The ministry said that the total loss in wages alone for the Egyptian laborers in Kuwait is \$1.5 billion, [which is] equivalent to 452,461,000 Kuwaiti dinars. The number of workers harmed by this loss during the Gulf crisis is 179,500. The number includes workers on loan or on leave without pay either from the [Egyptian] Government or the [Egyptian] public sector who were not internal employees [of Kuwait] but were there during the Iraqi occupation.

The report pointed out that such wages were calculated based upon factual averages of the classes of laborers, as well as of those who stayed in Kuwait during the occupation, who are considered to be among those involuntarily unemployed.

The loss of the Egyptian labor force in Kuwait in stocks and goods of material value was \$15,743,573.

Uncashed end-of-service bonuses amounted to \$3,391,066,069, equivalent to 988,649,168 Kuwaiti dinars.

As for those who worked in Iraq, the ministry report stated that the returnees from Iraq after the outbreak of the crisis totalled 232,271 persons. Their outstanding accounts and savings in [Iraqi] banks were \$260 million.

Uncovered warrants for payment up to 16 September [1990] totalled \$682.9 million. The savings seized by the Iraqi side in Iraqi banks and which [Iraq] refused to transfer reached \$720 million. This [estimate] is based upon the average monthly remittance for the worker abroad, which is \$600 multiplied by the number of Egyptians in Iraq for eight months. Losses in goods of material value were estimated at \$700 million as stated in the loss-enumeration forms [completed by the

returnees]. Therefore, the total loss is \$2.362 billion, without accounting for outstanding wages and end-of-service bonuses for the Egyptians who worked in the sector protected by social security in Iraq as well as those in the social sector. This amount does not include calculating outstanding compensation for the Egyptians.

Writer Speaks of Democratic Development After War

91AA0247A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
13 Mar 91 p 7

[Article by Salah-al-Din Hafiz: "Frankness Following War"]

[Text] We have said and we continue to say that while the Gulf war is over militarily, the psychological, economic, and political aftershocks have yet to begin impacting forcefully and violently on the most sensitive nerve in this sensitive region of the world, a region primed with both hidden and erupting problems and crises and containing every element of conflict and explosion.

The war is over. We must get beyond its tragedy and bitterness and strive for a better future. We must prepare for the future properly to avoid repeating the Gulf war every decade and to prevent a new dictator from rising with every generation to lead us to destruction. Having made war, we must now address one another frankly. Having been enemies, we must now work together. Frankly speaking, the situation that existed in all of our countries prior to and during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the war, the liberation of Kuwait, and the destruction of Iraq, is no longer fit to exist or continue.

A tremendous earthquake has struck. A feature of earthquakes is that the shock waves travel in successive uninterrupted geometric patterns, spreading from the epicenter to neighboring and outlying areas. Although Kuwait and Iraq, the sites of the initial tragedy, jointly constitute the epicenter where the severest destruction and wholesale slaughter occurred, the tremors are much more far-reaching. They cover not just the Gulf region and nearby parts of the Arabian Peninsula, but every corner of the Arab nation from the distant east to the far west.

Apart from the disgrace and humiliation, the negative effects of this earthquake simply in terms of destruction and victims are vast and beyond calculating or quantifying. Yet there is a positive effect, albeit perhaps only one, that comes out of this earthquake, namely, it has opened our eyes to the fact that our prewar precrisis situation was unsuitable. Now, the past is dead. We must change what is within us because "God will not change what affects a people until they change that which is in themselves." We must now change that which we are capable of changing before change is certainly, and perhaps coercively, imposed upon us.

Last week Secretary of State James Baker was asked about the possibility of a change in policies of rule and the application of democracy in Kuwait and the other Arab countries in the wake of the many consequences of the Gulf war at all levels. He responded: "We realize that democracy is the approach. It is the best and most ideal system, but we cannot impose a change in their system of government on them, or impose our ideas on them, for fear that someone will view this as realizing Saddam's demand for overthrowing the ruling regimes." Great....

Since we have sought assistance from the allies politically and militarily, why not use their advice to put our internal house in order now that the Gulf war is over? Why not study Baker's statement and understand its real meaning, the underlying import of which is that to avoid suspicion the Americans will not force immediate changes in ruling regimes in the region? The notion of change is implicit and certain in their plans. They are seeking it even if they will not openly say so. Tomorrow, however, they may declare change and impose it, not in sympathy with our situation, but in defense of their interests, particularly what they term "the stability of friendly regimes."

Rather than have the Americans or others force us to change in form and content, we would be better off taking matters into our own hands and making our changes ourselves according to our own ideas, needs, and basic demands. While the Americans have been generally intrigued with the idea of "modernizing ruling regimes" as they have done in many parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, they have never selected anything but distorted regimes, false democracies, client rulers, and Americanized policies. We do not want this, and we reject it.

What, then, do we want?

Having been flattened by crisis and awakened by war, we shall with full awareness take repossession of the democratic revolution that burst forth on the streets of Eastern Europe for two years, overturning incredibly strong and dominant communist totalitarian regimes. While we realize that our political, social, and economic conditions are not the same as theirs, we reaffirm that our hopes for democracy are no less, and our objective is no more distant, than theirs were.

At present our governments race to exploit the atmosphere and consequences of the war to reach agreement on military and security arrangements which are truly important. But they have forgotten that while such security arrangements may one day withstand a foreign danger, they will not hold firm in the face of a danger which is primarily internal. The internal danger of which we speak is that of the street acting, exploding in a disorganized manner to impose democratic change and progress by force in the hope that this will bring relief from the sufferings imposed upon it.

Perhaps the aftershock of the Gulf war, in the form of a shattered Iraq and a liberated Kuwait, offers the best

evidence of what we are saying. The call for democracy and genuine modernization and progress is the primary slogan being raised, whether in the Iraqi street which by rebelling is trying to exploit this historic opportunity to overthrow a one-man dictatorial regime that has proven its failure through a succession of military and political misadventures, subjecting the nation and its believers to unforgettable, unrivalled disaster, or in the Kuwaiti street as it celebrates liberation and return following deprivation and destruction. But the joy of regaining the nation, its wealth, and its land, will not close the eyes of Kuwaiti "democrats" to that fact that what was alright and acceptable before the invasion is no longer so after the war. Hence, the voices of the modernizers and democrats, both those who were abroad during the crisis—such as the National Constitutional Front—and those who stayed inside to form the core of the resistance and the "Democratic Platform," are demanding a return to a sound democracy, based on the 1962 constitution and in accordance with the recommendations of the Kuwaiti People's Congress held in Jeddah last October. These are now considered a "new political charter" between the governing authority and the various forces of the Kuwaiti people with the objective of bringing about political, constitutional, economic, and social reforms that would guarantee greater participation and social and political pluralism and establishing public freedoms, basic human rights, and a return to the practice of democracy halted in 1986.

Although Kuwait and Iraq are the most proximate candidates for starting the march toward democratic development and sociopolitical modernization following their searing in the fires of crisis, war, destruction, and unrest, it would be comically foolish to say that the rest of the Arab countries will not be affected by this inevitable and swift tide. The crisis occurred; the war happened; and both were over in seven months. But the greater crisis, the ultimate war, are those that will remain with us, living with us as we live with them for well into the future, namely, the crisis of modernization and the war for democratic progress in the face of forces seeking to maintain prevailing conditions, one-man rule, and autocratic control of both wealth and power.

The political and social effects of this destructive war may be more latent than obvious in the first moments, but they are interacting and increasing with each passing day. Eventually they will ripen—they say that crises and wars ripen people—and when that happens the comically foolish will realize that this crisis was not a summer cloud, nor the war simply a game, but a gigantic transformation point imposed by appalling conditions.

The road to safety or the road to regret; this is the choice we must make before they deprive us of even the very right to choose.

ISRAEL

MK Shahal Proposes Palestinian State

91AE0298B Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 1 Mar 91 p 9

[Article by Michal Yudelmann]

[Text] "There is no leadership in either large party today. The tragedy is that the political leaderships of both Labor and the Likud are not telling the public the truth. All they think about is how to curry favor with the public and in the process they're losing the public's faith."

This assertion by labor MK [Knesset Member] Moshe Shahal this week accompanied his dramatic public advocacy of Israeli acquiescence in a Palestinian state in the territories. He implied he was prepared to defy his party on this policy, which Labor joins Likud in rejecting: "I've reached the stage in which keeping my Knesset seat for the price of keeping silent is not worth it any longer," he says.

Shahal last week dropped a political bombshell on his party leadership, when at its meeting he proposed a new peace initiative focusing on a Palestinian state. The unprecedented proposal came as a direct challenge to both party chairman Shim'on Peres and his arch-rival Yitzhaq Rabin. The MK will be contending for his party leadership at the approaching Labor convention scheduled for the autumn. He is already preparing the planks on which he will appeal for his party membership support. One of the Labor doves leaders, MK Yossi Beilin, went so far as to quip "now we have a leader" after Shahal's unexpected statement.

But the doves, mostly belonging to Labor's younger generation, have no intention of allowing Shahal to occupy their share of the limelight and are preening their own leader, said to be Nisim Tzvi, secretary of the Moshavim Movement. At the same time, Labor's hawks have already voiced their objection to Shahal's sudden dovish turn.

Shahal will not only have to run against both Peres and Rabin, who are continuing to contend for party leadership, but also against others of his own age group, known as the "interim generation"—members in their fifties. These include MKs Mordekhay Gur, Gad Ya'aqobi, Ora Namir and perhaps Uzi Bar'am, all of whom have also decided to vie for the leading party position.

For many of this "interim generation," the showdown in the coming convention is regarded as the last chance to make their pitch for leadership before the younger generation takes over, after Peres' and Rabin's retirement.

There is no doubt in the minds of both Labor and Likud leaders that, with the end of the Gulf war, all eyes will turn to Israel, which will face considerable international pressures to reach a settlement with the Palestinians and Arab states, a settlement which will involve territorial

concessions. As the Likud government braces to withstand these pressures, Peres, as first reported in THE JERUSALEM POST last week, is already working on a secret new peace initiative.

It is these circumstances, rather than the internal party considerations, which made it so urgent for Shahal to announce his peace initiative now, instead of waiting until just before the Labor convention, the MK explains. "The end of the Gulf war will place the Israeli-Palestinian dispute at the top of the international agenda and priorities. The U.S. will be keen to show an even-handed policy to balance its image after having attacked an Arab state," Shahal says.

In his view, "this opens up a chance to conduct a real dialogue with the Palestinians, to pay a price which will bring a permanent, stable peace settlement. The Arab states miss no opportunity to note that where Israel is concerned the UN resolutions are not implemented. The U.S. will want to pay back Mubarak, Fahd and Assad for their cooperation in the anti-Iraqi coalition. Whoever doesn't read the map this way, is deluding himself."

Accordingly, the Labor MK feels that "Israel must come up with a daring plan which will put to the test the Arabs' readiness to recognize our right to exist and to have a state. If they agree to renounce all other claims, including the right of return [of the refugees] and accept regional security agreements which will safeguard us, I see no reason not to go for final settlement," Shahal explains.

Thus, Shahal proposes an independent Palestinian entity—"yes, even a Palestinian state if that's what they want to call it"—linked by an accommodation to Jordan, perhaps a confederation with Jordan. "Yes, there will be territorial concessions, but we will know once and for all that this is the end of the hostility between us and we will have a safe border," he says.

The only thing missing in his plan, Shahal admits, is the leadership which will take it up and drive the issue to its conclusion. Such a leadership, which could win the public over by virtue of telling it the truth, could persuade even those who are against territorial concessions today. But such a leadership does not exist—neither in the Likud, whose government, he charges, doesn't care about what happens in three or five years and concerns itself only with how much funds to allocate the ultra-Orthodox parties so the Likud can stay in power—nor in Labor, whose leaders, he thinks, have so far catered to public opinion and are afraid to tell the public what it might not like to hear.

Shahal is sure that the Israeli public will be willing to pay a territorial price for future safety, security borders and peace. "The public knows that its politicians are selling it a load of formulas which have nothing to do with reality. After I announced my proposal, I was flooded by telephone calls and letters from senior military figures, leading economic figures, businessmen and politicians, even ardent Likud supporters, who encouraged me and supported my program."

But Shahal, a former minister in the national unity government and an attorney known for his systematic, logical thinking, is far from claiming for himself the charisma required to swing such a proposal on his back alone and warns of the dire consequences of remaining blind to reality.

"I am pessimistic. Because logic is not what counts in political life. Historically, states with national myths did not wake up to reality before a sobering national disaster. Political leaderships are not usually guided by logic and the power of reason."

An introverted man, Shahal has a horror of using his growing up in an Ashqelon ma'abara to help build up his political image. Asked what he needs the political wars and setbacks for, in view of his successful legal practice, Shahal smiles, looking over his luxurious office, and allows that that is the question everyone in his family is always asking him.

"A leader is not only a product of some fashion trend, which the public will buy or not buy. A real leader is someone who tells the public the truth. With all respect to Rabin and Peres, they suffer from fear of heights. Let's face it, their positions have not brought them to power. I don't belong to the doves or to the hawks or any other feathered bird; I'm a realist, guided by logic and its inevitable conclusions.

"And the inevitable conclusion is that in the end the Israeli Palestinian dispute will be settled on this basis [a Palestinian state]. Or there will be another war, and after that the dispute will be settled on this basis. The question is, at what price will the public sober up?"

The myth of the strategic importance of the territories was shattered finally by the Iraqi missile attacks on Israel, he contends, and non-conventional warfare is a fact in the region. What this generation's leadership is doing by ignoring these realities, Shahal notes, is "eternalizing the dispute and leaving it to future generations, without examining the possibilities to solve it in our lifetime."

Question of Strategic Depth Discussed

91AE0298A Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 1 Mar 91 pp 5, 6

[Article by Ze'ev B. Begin; quotation marks as published]

[Text] "Missiles are not too impressed by 'strategic depth.' When a missile is launched from Iraq or Syria it does not stop in Judaea, in Samaria or in the Gaza district in order to receive permission to continue on its course." This statement, heard recently among leaders of the Israeli left, is intended to undermine the assumption that Israeli rule over the area west of the Jordan River is vital to the existence of the Jewish State. The smart wording cannot hide the superficial thought behind the left's policy.

Even after the Arab missile attack on Israel's population centers, it must be understood that the source of the threat to Israel's existence is a ground attack, and a missile attack only increases this threat. In support of this thesis, I refer to the important conclusion reached by the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, in its 1988 report, referring to the possibility that an independent Arab state would be created west of the Jordan, devoid of heavy weaponry.

Among the dangers to Israel as enumerated in this report, the central one is that "the temptation would be great for Arab ground forces, employing armor and artillery, to seize Judaea and Samaria, completing the first stage in a single night's movement from the Jordan bridges to the Israeli border."

We face here the common military problem of calculating "time and space." The State of Israel will always be protected by a small standing army, dependent on its reserves, and will always require a process to mobilize these reserves. The mobilization will always take a few days, and can be executed only after the warning, assessment, deliberation and decision by a democratic government. This is the practical timetable that should be compared to the above assumption, that a few hours are sufficient for a large Arab land force to be deployed at a zero distance from our population center, the strategic center of the State of Israel.

The problem of missiles exacerbates this danger. The Syrian army has fielded accurate missiles with a range of 100 kilometers, as well as missiles with a range of 300 kilometers, carrying conventional warheads weighing 1,000 kilograms, and even carrying chemical warheads. Chinese missiles with a range of 2,500 kilometers were supplied to Saudi Arabia and could reach Iranian hands.

In a coordinated attack, our enemies can inflict serious damage to our airfields, using their accurate missiles, and inflict heavy casualties to population centers, using the others. This would disrupt Israel's ability to maintain the vital mobilization of its reserves, while a large ground force crosses the Jordan, greeted by the Arab residents cheering on their rooftops in demilitarized Samaria, reaching the heart of Israel "in a single night's movement." This is a severe-yet-plausible scenario, and its potential realization carries the serious and not-improbable ramification: the surrender of the Jewish State.

It is not necessary to be a member of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to reach the conclusion that the threat to Israel's existence is indeed a group attack from the east.

Examination of the Labor Party's platform reveals this recognition in its keystone item, stressing that Israel's "security border" (however hazy this term may be) must be the Jordan River. Yet, if anyone postulates, in the wake of the Gulf war, that "a missile from Iraq or Syria will not stop in Judaea, in Samaria or in the Gaza district in order to request permission to continue on its path,"

it must be understood that such a missile will not stop to present a passport at Israeli outposts along the Jordan River. And this even if the Jordan Valley is under Israeli sovereignty, according to the concept of "territorial compromise."

Relinquishing parts of Judaea and Samaria would immediately lead to a single possible result: the seizing of power by a mixture of the PLO and Hamas, and the establishment of a terrorist Arab state. The danger in its constitution is its ability to mobilize the Arab force, using the slogan of Arab solidarity in order to implement the Arab "right of return" to Yafa and Lod.

If there is no strategic value to the Samarian hills and the Judaeon mountains, it is impossible to assign a real security value to meager forces deployed along the narrow strip of the Jordan Valley, in a topographically inferior area. These troops would find themselves caught between the pincers of an Arab army invading from the east and an enemy state at their west, while the mobilization of reserves would be interrupted by missile attacks. This "security" proposal, adopted by the Labor Party for the past 24 years, stands in direct contrast to the basic military rule: there can be no defense without depth, and there is no meaning to "depth" without a territorial continuity to the strategic center.

If there is no strategic value to the hills of Samaria and Judaea, it is difficult to see what strategic meaning the Israeli left attributed to the plains of the Golan Heights. If the guideline is "compromise at any price," it is to be expected that the Golan Heights would be included in that price. According to the new line of thought, Syrian missiles will not stop to request permission to pass over Kibbutz Marom Golan, and therefore the "strategic depth" will be provided by "peace arrangements" with Hafiz al-Asad or his brother Rifat.

Leaders of the left have refrained these past few years, and not coincidentally, from demanding the pursuit of peace treaties with the Arab states. This important tangible political term is missing from both the Peres-Husayn agreement (London, April 11, 1987) and the Schultz document (March 4, 1988), which our doves embraced so hastily.

This is clearly settling for less than the required minimum, both in our demand of our enemies to accept the right of the Jewish State to exist, and in our insistence on the area which is vital for our security. This modest approach conforms to the "strategic" plan, offered two years ago to the Israeli voter by the Labor Party, according to which an electronic fence would defend an Israel within the "green line." Facing the rise of violent Islamic fundamentalism, its surge unrelated to the Arab-Israeli conflict, peace "arrangements" and security "accommodations" such as these are unacceptable to a reasonable household in Israel.

The Zionist conclusion is, therefore, logical and plausible. It is vital for our security that Israel control the

entire area west of the Jordan River, all of 30 kilometers wide. If we defend our country—it will protect our people.

The writer, a Likud MK [Knesset Member], is a member of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee.

Eilat Coastal Defense Activities Described

91AE0322A Tel Aviv BAMAHAHE in Hebrew
6 Mar p 26

[Text] The Navy's activity in Eilat has now returned to normal, at least during the day. When we increase our speed on the Dabbur [Hornet] and approach the northern coast, a small Jordanian patrol craft follows us at a distance. They earn the strange sympathy of the Israeli crew: "The Jordanians are working hard now. Their conditions are terrible. At the start of the war, eight instead of five persons were stationed on the Jordanian patrol craft. All of them went around on the decks with Kalashnikov [rifles], and every time we changed direction or speed, they assumed battle positions. When they realized that we had no combat intentions, they relaxed a bit."

Lieutenant Junior Grade Itziq recounts the Jordanians' attempts to provoke the Israeli crews, even in times of relaxation. "Before the war, the Jordanians attempted to cross the border and they aimed flashlights at us. All of these games stopped when the war broke out. It is not worthwhile for them to engage us, and they know it."

[BAMAHAHE] Commander of the Red Sea theatre, Captain Y., readiness in the Red Sea theatre is the highest in the Navy. How is this reflected in the field?

[Captain Y.] It is correct that readiness has been strengthened here given the common sea and land border with Jordan and the fact that Jordan was and is an Iraqi satellite. Due to the fears, we stepped up current security activity with the intention of preventing and disrupting hostile activity. Fundamental elements, whom we know to exist in the Jordanian Army, might attempt to attack Israeli targets.

[BAMAHAHE] Does the proximity between the coast of al-Aqabah and the coast of Eilat, which is usually humming with civilians, present a problem to you? Would you be able to intercept a speed boat headed towards shore?

[Captain Y.] The time interval is one of the most difficult problems facing us. Our alertness must be so high that any such penetration attempt can be intercepted immediately, and we do not find ourselves pursuing it. It should be remembered that the system here combines the coastal detection array, current security at sea, and Infantry Corps forces on the coast, with the goal of preventing a penetration by sea. If we do not succeed in doing so, the integrated system must still provide a solution, in other words, the rapid deployment of Infantry Corps forces in the area of an anticipated

landing, as was done regarding the Nitzanim incident [the sea-attack attempt by the Abu-'Abbas group]. The system is trained and can do its job well. The Navy cannot guarantee the hermetic sealing off of the sea. The optimal solution is a joint system.

[BAMAHAHE] Could you describe the Jordanian naval deployment in the Gulf of Eilat?

[Captain Y.] The Jordanian coast guard is composed of very old ships armed only with machine guns. From a naval standpoint we have a clear edge over them. If, God forbid, we are thrown into a confrontation, I have no doubt that we would have the advantage.

[BAMAHAHE] Al-Aqabah is the only open pro-Iraqi port. Can you speak about activity at the port during the past two months?

[Captain Y.] The Port of al-'Aqabah has undergone a number of changes. Normally there are about 15 to 20 [docked] ships and many ships anchored in the northern part of the gulf as they wait. Since the naval blockade against Iraq began, the coalition forces have been preventing commercial ships from entering the Gulf of Eilat. Only a few ships have received permission to enter. As a result, the volume of activity has dropped to two or three ships. Recently, the volume of activity has increased, and the number of ships now fluctuates between six and eight.

Housing Unit Availability, Land Prices Discussed

TA11041746A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 11 Apr 91 p 7

[Text] At the end of 1992, 300,000 people will remain homeless, among them 28,000 will be young couples who will be unable to use their eligibility for a mortgage, due to the high cost of apartments.

All in all, Israel will be short of 90,000 housing units in another year and a half—an unprecedented situation.

These statistics were relayed yesterday by MK [Knesset Member] Rafi Edri, based on an inquiry done for him which concludes that already by the end of 1991, Israel will be short of 40,000 housing units. This is based on an assumption that some 250,000 immigrants will arrive in Israel this year.

MK Edri, who worked for years in the construction industry, yesterday claimed that the Housing Ministry's land policy is a failure. According to him, the cost of land has increased by 80-100 percent in the last year alone. "At this rate, we can expect a 15-20 percent increase in the cost of an apartment by the middle of this year," MK Edri added.

JORDAN

February Rains Raise Dam Level

91AE0337C Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
21 Feb 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Rain that fell in Jordan since the beginning of February has meant that around 12 million cubic metres have accumulated behind the King Talal Dam, raising its present quantity to 18 million cubic metres, according to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

Officials at the ministry were quoted as saying that Wadi al-'Arab Dam now has 7.632 million, Sharhabil 853,000, Wadi Shu'ayb 812,000, and Kafrayn nearly two million cubic metres of water.

The total capacity of the King Talal Dam is 80 million cubic metres of water should be collected in the reservoir as a minimum for a relatively fair agricultural season in the Jordan Valley which is irrigated by water from the dams.

The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) had earlier stopped pumping dam water to the farmlands of the Jordan Valley since they get sufficient water from rain and streams. The Ministry of Water has now resumed pumping water from the Dayr 'Alla Water Project to the Amman region for drinking purposes after a break of several months; and said that the Jordan Valley region has received surplus amounts of collected rain water allowing this procedure to take place.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister Mohammad al-'Alawinah Wednesday called on agricultural engineers to lease state-owned land to be developed for increasing food production.

The move, he said, aims at helping unemployed agricultural engineers to benefit by developing state-owned land and increasing food production.

The minister's announcement followed a recent meeting with the Jordanian Agricultural Engineers Association during which the question of unemployed engineers was discussed.

The government earlier announced that it would allow organisations, companies, private citizens and farmers to develop state-owned land in the Jordan Valley for the production of cereals.

Wheat and other grain is a priority for the country which imports most of its cereal needs.

Plans to Address Mass Layoffs Discussed

91AE0337B Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
4 Mar 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The question of mass layoff of workers at various private organisations and firms was discussed in depth at a meeting between Labour Minister

'Abd-al-Karim al-Dughmi and Khaldun Abu-Hassan, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Industry and Trade, and an agreement was reached on pursuing efforts to settle relevant issues.

Al-Dughmi stressed that dismissal problems should be settled in cooperation between the federation, the ministry and the employers union, and emphasised the need for Jordanian organisations to safeguard the worker's interests under the present difficult circumstances, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

In January, 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, secretary-general of the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions and members of the federation's executive bureau complained to Prime Minister Mudar Badran about problems related to unemployment among workers in Jordan, and the prime minister promised that the government would do all it can to help solve this problem.

Furthermore, Mr Badran noted that the new labour law would provide further protection to the Jordanian workers and would give them immunity against arbitrary dismissal from private sector institutions and companies.

The layoffs were an obvious symptom of the serious consequences of the Gulf crisis on Jordan's economy. Some businesses have reported a drop in operations by up to 90 percent.

The Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation last month reported that not a single investor had requested to start a business at the Sahab Industrial City near Amman since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis last August.

At the meeting Sunday the minister and Abu-Hassan reviewed the question of non-Jordanian workers in the Kingdom and ways to control the local labour market by substituting non-Jordanians with local job seekers after offering unemployed Jordanians training at the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC).

The minister and Abu-Hassan decided to set up a committee grouping representatives from the Ministry of Labour, the VTC and the Federation of Amman Chamber of Industry to discuss the country's industrial sector's problems and its need of workers.

The committee, according to Petra, will examine the type of training, the workers needed and offer special training required to conform to companies' plans.

The two sides also decided to link approval of any work permit offer to non-Jordanians to the vocational training programmes and plans and to focus attention on giving training to Jordanians in areas of dress making and sewing, leather industries and plastic production, the agency added.

The VTC had already prepared plans to offer job seekers three to six months training courses to enable them to take up jobs manned now by non-Jordanians.

According to Petra, the two sides Sunday agreed on holding a symposium on means of increasing industrial production.

They noted that the symposium should be well-prepared for the chamber and the Ministry of Labour.

Al-Dughmi and Abu-Hassan also agreed to introduce amendments to the VTC law and the customs and to take measures for reducing interest on loans to industrial projects. The two officials deferred for six months payments due from industrial businesses to the Social Security Corporation in a bid to help these industries overcome the present difficulties.

Figures for Decline of al-'Aqabah Port Activity

91AE0303A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Feb 91
p 6

[Article by Muhammad Amin: "Transit Activity in al-'Aqabah Port Affected, Noticeable Decline in Export, Import Goods; 150 Ships Visit Port Last Month"]

[Text] One hundred fifty ships visited al-'Aqabah port last November compared to 203 ships during the same period in 1989. The measures being taken by naval forces of the coalition countries under American command against vessels in the Red Sea headed for Jordan are undoubtedly among the most important reasons contributing to lower transport activity at the port. The high cost of insurance on the vessels and their cargoes is another important contributing factor.

Official figures show that total goods exports and imports into the port last November declined noticeably to 992,300 tons compared to 1,410,300 during the same month in 1989, i.e., a fall of 418,000 tons.

The figures also show the volume of goods exports and imports into the port for November was 20,000 tons less than that recorded for the previous month.

Phosphate, Fertilizer, Potash Exports

Official figures indicate that 366,700 tons of Jordanian phosphate were exported from al-'Aqabah port last November compared to 501,600 tons the previous month, a fall of 134,900 tons. Comparison of the November phosphate export figure with that of the same month in 1989 reveals only a slight decline of 26,300 tons.

Jordan's fertilizer exports from al-'Aqabah port last November reached 172,500 tons compared to 38,900 tons last October, an increase of 33,600 tons, while fertilizer exports increased about 56,200 tons over the same month in 1989 [as published].

According to these figures, Jordanian potash exports from al-'Aqabah port last November reached 108,600 tons compared to 120,000 exported the preceding

month, a drop of 11,400 tons. The figures show that potash exports fell off 22,300 tons compared to November 1989.

The volume for national goods exported from al-'Aqabah port last November, other than the materials already mentioned, amounted to 1,770,500 tons [as published] compared to 167,700 tons exported during the preceding month.

A comparison of this export volume to that of November 1989 shows a large increase of 133,600 tons.

The volume of goods reexported through al-'Aqabah port amounted to 11,600 tons compared to 8,000 tons reexported the preceding month. [This is] a decrease of 2,900 tons when compared to November 1989.

The figures show a very large decrease in other exports and transit export volume last November, the total amounting to 1,300 tons compared to 39,300 tons during the same month in 1989.

Goods Imports

As for goods entering the port, statistics reveal that last November 247,700 tons of goods were brought into the country compared to 171,500 tons during the preceding month, an increase of 76,000,200 tons [as published].

A comparison of November 1990 figures with those of November 1989 show a slight drop in imports of 9,100 tons.

Goods coming to the port on a transit basis fell off tragically last November to 6,400 tons compared to 515,600 tons for the same month in 1989, a decrease of 509,200 tons.

This is undoubtedly a result of the U.N. Security Council's unjust resolutions imposing an economic blockade and embargo on Iraq, since transit goods entering al-'Aqabah were largely destined for that brotherly country. In 1989, 6,162,900 tons of goods transited al-'Aqabah port, mainly headed for Iraq.

Passenger transport activity statistics for the port of al-'Aqabah show 17,921 arrivals last November, compared to 12,776 during the same month in 1989.

The number of passengers departing via al-'Aqabah last November amounted to 23,831, compared to 22,685 departures during the same month in 1989.

Industrial Investment at Standstill

91AE0337A Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
24 Feb 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation [JIEC] says that it has received no application from any Arab or foreign sources to start new businesses at the industrial city of Sahab or at the Irbid industrial city since the outbreak of the Gulf crisis last August.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted corporation officials as saying that the JIEC has not even received any requests for information concerning the facilities and privileges offered to investors and industrialists in the Kingdom over the past six months.

It is hard to conduct an exact estimate of the losses inflicted on the Jordanian industrial sector because of the Gulf crisis, but rough estimates say that they exceed 100 million Jordanian Dinars, according to these officials.

They said that the Gulf war has made things even worse for the Jordanian industry which has been counting on exports to Gulf countries and Iraq which no more import any of the Jordanian products.

The JIEC officials said that the high cost of production, resulting from insurance surcharges imposed by shipping companies, harassment of cargo vessels heading for al-'Aqabah, the high cost of primary materials needed for industrial processes and difficulties facing the transit trade between Jordan and Arab states, have all contributed to this state of affairs in the Kingdom.

Indeed, factories which have been organising three shifts for their workers have now dropped to two or one, a situation which called for the reduction of the number of workers in general, the officials said.

Petra quoted businessmen and industrialists as saying that they were willing to contribute towards bolstering the national economy and were careful not to aggravate the unemployment problem and therefore they have asked their employees to take their annual leaves or leaves without pay for the time being until matters clear up.

However, they say that other firms had to lay off workers because business was too bad to keep any of them.

Difficulties facing industries have naturally prompted investors from Jordan and abroad to refrain from undertaking any venture for the moment thereby offering no new jobs opportunities for the thousands of job seekers in the country, said these officials.

According to JIEC statistics, industries worst affected by the prevailing situation are pharmaceuticals, wood and metal work, chemical as well as industries of construction materials.

Some of these industries have already closed down due to the lack of raw materials which have been imported from other countries.

A number of industrialists and businessmen and officials at the Ministry of Industry and Trade have been offering proposals for intensifying efforts to find new markets for Jordan abroad or to pool the efforts and resources of groups of industries forming corporate firms that can help overcome the difficulties.

The Sahab Industrial City on the outskirts of Amman has more than 500 factories and industrial businesses, and at least 100 million Jordanian Dinars were invested in them. More than 5,000 people were working at these factories and businesses in Sahab before the Gulf crisis erupted.

Water Shortage Threat Described

91AE0303B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Feb 91 p 8

[Article by Malak al-Tall: "Farmers: 'Waste Water Destroying Our Crops,' Al-Bilbaysi: 'No Change in Purification Plants,' in This Section by and for People We Attempt to Bring Citizen's Concerns to Official Attention for Benefit of Society."]

[Text] God endowed this country with rich farmland and the rain to water this land. Taking into consideration the government's ongoing efforts to provide an alternative to rainwater to irrigate crops throughout the seasons, how suitable is stored water for irrigating farmland without damaging it?

Hundreds, indeed thousands, of donums of farmland have been put at risk and ruined as a result of irrigating crops with treated waste water.

Farmers say that crops all the way from Wadi Shu'ayb to al-Shunah al-Janubiyah for a distance of 20 kilometers along the floodbed line have been ruined by this water. It also ruined crops irrigated by water from the al-Zarqa' floodbed, including the al-Rusayfah basins. Water from the al-Ramtha purification plant used for crop irrigation in the area surrounding the station has also made it impossible to use what those farmers were growing.

AL-DUSTUR passed on the complaint of those adversely affected by irrigating their crops with waste water to Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz Washshah, secretary general of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), who said: "The water irrigating crops in Wadi Shu'ayb is basically water from the al-Salt purification plant, plus water from some springs and seeps that run from Wadi Shu'ayb to the al-Shunah al-Janubiyah region, plus flood water which we try to store behind the Wadi Shu'ayb dam." He added that the al-Shunah al-Janubiyah region involves an entire basin growing bananas, citrus, and vegetables that is totally reliant on this water. When treated water is highly concentrated, it will sometimes contain elements that affect the soil, and therefore, the crops growing in it. Dr. al-Washshah added that this water has been irrigating crops for a long time. If it now contains something that is ruining crops, it will have to be analyzed and dealt with.

Regarding the al-Zarqa' floodbed, the JVA Secretary General said: "Prior to the recent rainstorms, waters behind the King Talal dam were highly saline due to water coming from the al-Khirbah al-Samra' plant and because the rainy season was late. Normally the al-Khirbah al-Samra' water is mixed with spring and flood

water. But since the recent rainstorms the amount of water being stored has risen, and its quality has improved, especially in terms of salinity. Under present conditions this water will not affect the crops. It was in the past that such water ruined leaf crops. As for the area above the King Talal dam, that part is the responsibility of the Water Authority."

Waste Water

Engineer Mu'tazz al-Bilbaysi, secretary general of the Ministry of Water [Resources] and Irrigation, said that water coming from the purification plants, which is waste water, is used only for nonbeneficial agricultural purposes and is only consumed after being boiled. He added that there has been no change in these plants that would ruin crops irrigated with the water they produce, and said: "We are prepared to conduct an on-site investigation, determine the causes of this irregular situation, and remedy it."

Regarding the al-Ramtha purification plant, Eng. Bilbaysi clarified that water from this plant is used by the Ministry solely to irrigate trees. He added that the Ministry in cooperation with the Cooperative Society rented land near the society and planted it with barley, [and said]: "The land was watered one time with purification-plant water, and thereafter we relied on the rain God blessed us with during this good season."

Purification Plants 100 Percent Improper

Falih al-Gharayibah, governor of al-Balqa', said: "Water coming off the purification plants does not contain any chemical elements, therefore it is not ruining the trees or crops it irrigates. Moreover, a cabinet decree bans vegetable farming in this region so that [such produce] will not be sold to the populace. You should know that farm owners wish we would allow them to use purification-plant water so they could irrigate their crops with it. How can they be complaining that their crops have been ruined by irrigating with this water?" Mr. al-Gharayibah says that the al-Salt purification plant, like all other such plants in the Kingdom, is 100 percent improper since the water flowing through it is unfit for irrigating small vegetables such as carrots, lettuce, radishes, potatoes, and the like. This is why a ban was imposed on the use of such water to irrigate these vegetables. Citrus trees are an exception because they are not affected.

The governor of al-Balqa' adds: "What applies to the al-Salt purification plant also applies to the al-Zarqa' floodbed, the al-Rusayfah basins, and the Kafranjah purification plant. Moreover, we can not cancel the purification plants at a time when we are working with the government to allow us to use treated waste water in al-Shunah and Dayr 'Ala to irrigate crops. I need to point out that we banned vegetable irrigation with such water merely as a precaution because it is supposed to come from the purification plant fit for drinking, but considering the fact that it is not well purified, we banned irrigating crops with it."

Economic, Scientific, Technical Cooperation With USSR

91AE0311A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 Feb p 2

[Article: "Emphasis on Importance of Developing Cooperation in Areas of Electricity, Agriculture, Trade, Tourism"]

[Text] The cabinet has approved the official record of the second session of the joint Soviet-Jordanian Committee for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, which was held from 23 to 30 October 1990. In this session, progress was noted regarding economic and technical cooperation between the two countries since the Economic and Technical Agreement was signed on 21 January 1969. In this regard, the fulfillment was noted of the Soviet Union's obligations resulting from this agreement with regard to supplying equipment for the electrification of towns and villages in Jordan's central region, and equipment for training centers in Irbid, al-Mushari', and al-Salt.

Electricity

The two sides believe in the abundance of real possibilities for cooperation between agencies concerned in both countries in the field of electricity. The Soviet side stated that its agencies wished to participate in implementing certain projects in the five-way electricity net with Jordan's neighboring countries, as well as projects concerning the electricity grid between Egypt and Jordan. The Jordanian side stated that projects like those are to be arranged through international bids, and that it would welcome the participation of Soviet agencies in this bidding.

Moreover, the Jordanian side expressed its desire to develop cooperation with regard to rural electrification, through its being provided with materials required for this purpose, specifically the requirements of electricity distribution networks, including insulators and transformers valued at \$3 million. The Jordanian side requested that it be supplied with these materials by the Soviet authorities on convenient and easy terms. The Soviet side requested that payment be expedited for pending debts, which stem from previously supplying Jordan with materials, valued at approximately 1 million rubles. The Soviet side submitted a memorandum in this regard to the Jordanian side, and the latter promised to study the Soviet request, to follow up on it with the Jordanian quarters concerned, and to reply as soon as possible.

Phosphates

The two sides discussed the developments that occurred after the signing of the Agreement of Mutual Understanding—dated 14 April 1989—between the two countries, concerning the establishment of a project to produce phosphoric acid. They agreed to study the possibility of establishing this project with an Indian or

Finnish company, aiming at a production capacity of 360,000 tons of phosphoric acid, including 180,000 tons of super phosphoric acid.

A feasibility study is being made concerning the establishment of a project to produce phosphoric acid, with a capacity to produce 180,000 tons of super phosphoric acid, to cover the needs of the Jordanian and Soviet markets. With regard to the portion exported to the Soviet Union, the study is focussing on the plans and equipment required for this project, and the costs of sending experts to Jordan. The possibility is also being studied of importing the aluminum and sulfur required for the project existing currently in al-'Aqabah, and producing secondary aluminum phosphate.

Agriculture

The two sides agreed that the Jordanian authorities would continue to study the Soviet agencies' proposals concerning the construction of multitiered greenhouses, and single-tiered plastic greenhouses, which represent protective agriculture. Moreover, pursuant to the proposals previously submitted to the Jordanian side, the two sides agreed that the authorities concerned from both countries would hold discussions regarding these proposals at the first possible opportunity, while the Soviet side reiterated the willingness of Soviet agencies to study the possibility of participating in building the al-Wahdah Dam project on the al-Yarmuk River. The Jordanian side welcomed that, and promised to notify the Soviet side of the probable sources of financing for this project.

Furthermore, the Jordanian side expressed its desire to work together with Soviet agencies in the areas of cattle breeding, the use of biological means to combat diseases and insects, modern veterinary methods, mutual exchange of veterinarian supplies, and the training of experts in fields of sheep breeding and artificial insemination, as well as in areas of combating desertification and dealing with land salination.

In light of the positive results of previous cooperation in training national cadres, the two sides emphasized their readiness to increase this cooperation, through the establishment of new training centers, importing additional equipment and spare parts, and devising methods of supportive clarification for existing centers, with the assistance of Soviet authorities. In addition, the sending of Soviet teachers and technicians, in accordance with Jordan's requirements, was referred to. The two sides also referred to the possibility of sending Jordanian specialists to the Soviet Union to train in industrial fields, on a contractual basis.

Other Areas of Cooperation

With regard to exploiting Dead Sea salts, the two sides see the possibility of technical cooperation, on a contractual basis, to establish a complex to produce potassium sulfate, based on the potassium chloride produced by the current project on the shores of the Dead Sea, as well as

sodium sulfate. The two sides agreed that in order to discuss the technical and organizational problems associated with this project, experts from the agencies concerned in both countries—TAGROMO EXPORT and AGROHIM—would meet in Moscow in January 1991 and in the Soviet Research Institute in Leningrad, in order to make the necessary decisions in this regard.

The Jordanian side suggested the possibility of cooperation in exploiting oil shale for energy-producing purposes, especially by building an exploratory electrical generating unit, with a five-megawatt capacity, through the use of the most modern Soviet technology. In addition, studies should be conducted in Soviet research centers on Jordanian raw minerals, such as alkali, feldspar, silicate sand, tripoli, etc., for the purpose of determining methods to exploit these materials and raise their value, in order to put them in the service of various industries.

Moreover, a joint company should be established for the exploitation of Dead Sea salts and minerals for industrial purposes, as well as for the fishing industry, and for the construction of pipelines and fuel storage tanks.

Development of Forms of Cooperation

The two sides noted with pleasure the active search for new directions and forms of cooperation between Jordanian and Soviet agencies and companies, which has resulted in several projects for 1990.

The Soviet side referred to the possibility of joint investments either in the Soviet Union or Jordan, and in this regard the Soviet side submitted investment proposals for Jordanian agencies and companies including:

- Rebuilding old structures in the Soviet Union, and utilizing old and new buildings; and,
- Constructing and utilizing tourist and other hotel complexes in either of the two countries.

Dimensions of Trade Relations

The two sides also reviewed the movement and level of mutual trade between them, and referred to the progress that has been achieved in this regard, especially the increase in volume of Jordanian goods imported into the Soviet Union. A large number of Jordanian and Soviet agencies have entered into commercial exchanges between the two countries.

The two sides pointed out that achievements in this field are still below the aspirations and potentialities of the two countries, and agreed on the need to increase their efforts, in order to bring a greater number of Jordanian and Soviet agencies and companies into the trade arena between the two countries, and to choose appropriate mechanisms to achieve a larger trade volume.

The two sides stressed the importance of holding trade fairs in both countries, i.e., a Jordanian trade fair in Moscow, and a Soviet trade fair in Amman. The Soviet side agreed to make final arrangements to hold the

Jordanian trade fair in Moscow, during the visit to the Soviet Union in November 1991, which will be made by a delegation from the Jordanian trade centers' agency. The two sides also stressed the importance of stepping up the exchange of visits by business delegations, in order to become familiar with the possibilities of developing and expanding trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, and to arrange all facilities to achieve that goal.

Tourism

The two sides referred to the growth achieved in the field of tourism cooperation between the two countries in 1989. This growth was expected to increase during 1990, but the changes that unexpectedly occurred in the region had a negative effect on that. In this regard, the two sides emphasized the need to bolster tourism cooperation, and stressed that tourism authorities concerned in both countries should hold a joint conference during the first quarter of 1991, in order to discuss and develop a program for tourism cooperation between the two countries.

Moreover, the possibility of scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries was also discussed. The two sides agreed that the Jordanian side would submit its proposals concerning the subjects and directions of cooperation in these fields. In addition, there is mutual interest in cooperation in the health area, and the two sides recommended that authorities concerned in both countries study the possibility of exchanging experts and expertise in this regard.

U.S. Insensitivity to Kingdom's Concerns Criticized

91AE0300A Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 25 Feb 91 9 4

[Article by 'Uthman Hallaq, editor of the East Jerusalem daily AN-NAHAR]

[Text] In recent testimony before the U.S. Senate's foreign relations committee, Secretary of State James Baker summed up America's assessment of Jordan as follows: "When we look at alternatives we don't see what we perceive to be a particularly pretty picture...[as an]...alternative to the king...."

This statement, reducing Jordan to the level of an overripe banana republic, came in response to King Husayn's criticism of the American-led coalition's zealous assault on Iraq. Ironical that at a time when America is defending the integrity and sovereignty of one Middle East state, Kuwait, it undermines respect for another.

Apart from serving to underscore Washington's displeasure with Jordan's position in the war, Baker's statement raises a number of questions about how America defines its relationships with Arab states—at least the poor, weak ones—and the "new world order" that may confront us.

It must be difficult for Americans to imagine even for a moment the position of those living in a country such as Jordan: a state in the midst of an unsettled region, party to conflicts beyond its direct control, its economy constrained by a lack of natural wealth, dependent on trade with its powerful neighbors. A country of the size and wealth of the U.S. can boast a degree of independence unknown to most of the world.

Proud of their direct and forthright manner, Americans may never have to learn the art of subtlety, or link their survival to their ability to coax, cajole and placate a more powerful neighbor. How does a poor, small nation gain the respect of a superpower? By endorsing its words and deeds, no matter how simplistic, contradictory, and shortsighted? Or by honestly voicing the views of its people, even in opposition to the Western war effort?

Whatever the differences that divide Washington and Amman in this current crisis, the fact that King Husayn has survived for 39 years as the head of a fledgling country that has grown and evolved politically confirms his understanding of the Middle East and its dynamics. Might not his divergence of views with the West shed some important light on what realistic options might lie ahead?

One would assume that America's new world order for the Middle East would include the catchphrase "democratic and economic reforms." Jordan in 1989 launched a process of democratization novel to the Arab world. That the lessening of restrictions against public speech and assembly has resulted in the expression of anti-Western sentiment should be welcomed as a valid barometer of the mood of an important state caught between the borders of Israel, Syria and Iraq.

Actually, the deterioration in relations between Washington and Amman began with the Camp David Accords, when the king refused to enter into negotiations on behalf of the Palestinians. Later, in the early days of the intifadah, then-secretary of state George Schultz pressured the king to enter talks with Israel on the basis of Camp David. Instead, the king chose to disengage from the West Bank.

The American administration viewed his apparent truculence with disfavor and cut aid to the kingdom; they encouraged their Arab allies to do the same. The ensuing economic hardship experienced in Jordan, coupled with a further deterioration of the conditions in the territories, and declarations in Israel that Jordan is Palestine brought Jordan's fears to their peak.

All these factors served to distance Jordan from its reliance on the West as an ally, while pushing the king to seek out a regional protector. The Gulf crisis has drastically affected Jordan, with losses of over \$2 billion in trade and commercial contracts with Iraq and massive costs incurred by an influx of refugees. The U.S. "rewarded" Jordan by closing its only seaport, al-'Aqabah, under the pretext that goods shipped there would find their way to Iraq.

America seems to have failed to recognize the values that characterize the people of Jordan. Their pride and dignity have never been based on power and wealth. Thus, Baker's suggestion that U.S. aid will be doled out in measure of the degree to which Jordan cooperates with American designs rankles badly.

The Hashemites who rule the country were the first to rebel against oppression in the Great Arab Revolt of 1916 against the autocratic rule of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, a sense of history dictates the terms of their support for all Arab nationalist causes. As King Husayn said in a recent television interview, "We appreciate true friends, but we are not cheap, and we cannot be bought."

The Gulf conflict has clearly underscored that the Middle East and the West are separate in impetus and motive. Washington's failure to understand this has led to the failure of their efforts to promote Middle East peace, and promises to condemn their vision of new world order to an early death.

MOROCCO

Commentary Examines Tensions Between King, People

91P40231A Paris LE MONDE in French 13 Apr 91
pp 1,7

[Commentary by Jacques de Barrin; all quotation marks as published]

[Text] Rabat—His heart was with the Iraqi people and his head with the coalition troops. Hassan II, who likes to emphasize the "strong symbiosis" that ties him to "his" subjects and who used the West as his model, succeeded in getting through the Gulf war almost without incident and with a skillfulness that even his opponents cannot dispute. Mr. Driss Basri, minister of the interior, congratulated himself by stating: "From all points of view, we managed this crisis well." Nevertheless the Moroccan king had to make concessions to placate a public completely supportive of the Iraqi position. For this reason he not only had to take into account the public's feelings in his speeches, but he also had to allow the people to express themselves in the street. An example of such expression was the demonstration on 3 February in Rabat, which was in response to the call of the opposition parties and assembled between 150,000 and 200,000 people. It was the largest demonstration since independence, with the exception of the "green march." In spite of all this, the king stayed the course as well as could be expected. He likewise refused to yield to the pressures of those who demanded the return of some 1,200 soldiers sent to Saudi Arabia at the beginning of the Gulf crisis, reminding his critics of the "purely defensive" mission of this contingent. In the same way, he made sure that the official media remained reasonable during this period and allowed the opposition press to lash out against the coalition forces.

Although the opposition parties unsubtly became the echo of popular sentiments, they stopped short of pressing their advantage against the government to the breaking point. It can be said that the bloody riots in Fes in mid-December hardly encouraged them to run the risk of further confrontations. Thus they preserved the chances for a dialogue, which had been initiated in May 1990 after a no-confidence vote in Parliament but that the Gulf war had stymied.

In any case, the brevity of the ground war spared Morocco serious disturbances. Indeed, it is not certain that Hassan II would have successfully walked the tight-rope if the "desert storm" had blown any longer. According to Amnesty International, "between 17 January and the end of February, more than 400 people—mostly high school and college students—were arrested in at least 25 cities for participating in prohibited demonstrations favoring Iraq. Approximately 100 were tried and convicted and given sentences of as much as 15 months in prison." Mr. Basri replies that this is "false" and that "no arrest was linked to the Gulf crisis."

As deftly as the emotions in the street were managed, relations between the king and "his" people apparently were no longer unclouded. Exactly a month before he celebrated the 30th anniversary of his ascension to the throne, hostile cries against him were heard during the demonstration in Rabat. This type of reaction in Morocco is very unusual. "There is a longing for change, which is growing stronger and stronger and is starting to be expressed openly," notes Mr. Nadir Yata, chief editor of the pro-Communist daily AL BAYANE ("The Manifesto").

"The Gulf war proved that there is no political vacuum," according to opposition officials who acted as spokesmen for opinions in need of expression. Due to the inevitable excess enthusiasm, gestures of solidarity proliferated. Some of the measures taken have remained in place, including the organization of collections [of blood, for example], the establishment of twin-city relationships between Moroccan and Iraqi towns, street and square name changes, the boycotting of cultural centers of coalition countries, etc. Even today the opposition press is unrelenting.

"It's time for vigilance," says Mr. Fathallah Oualalou, head of the parliamentary Socialist Union of Popular Forces group (USFP). "We must keep up the pressure."

The Gulf war has made its mark even within the opposition, now that the fever has somewhat subsided. Thus the Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS) has been heard criticizing, after the fact, "the oversimplification" exhibited by the USFP and Istiqlal Parties. Likewise, among the senior management of these two parties, we are seeing a silent struggle for influence between "hard-liners" and "moderates." These are internal squabbles that Hassan II always has known how to manipulate, if not encourage, in order to govern as he pleases.

Within the inner circles of power, they grumble that "the opposition parties have no program and even less so a common program, unless it is a similar desire to criticize the government." Still they admit that "aided by the Gulf war, each opposition party was led to rethink its positions" and that "dialogue could start up again during the coming months."

Is this an unnatural alliance between the two principal opposition parties, the peaceful USFP that is closely linked to social-democratic ideals and the turbulent Istiqlal, which USFP split from and that plays the populism card and even, on occasion, that of Islamism? Officials of these two parties swear vehemently that this is not the case and list all the opportunities that have been available to them for the last three and a half years to work together on social and parliamentary issues. They cite the no-confidence vote of last May and the call for a general strike as examples.

"Despite different priorities, a certain trust has developed between us," affirms Mr. Oualalou. "We are on the same wavelength as far as presenting common amendments during the parliamentary debates," adds Mr. Abdelhag Tazi, a member of the Istiqlal executive committee.

Does this mean that the opposition is going to become more combative? For the time being it is carefully avoiding any threatening moves in this direction. The PPS may be congratulating itself "on a climate once again favorable to social mobilization," but the USFP and Istiqlal Parties are revealing nothing of their intentions, if in fact these two groups even already have a battle plan in mind.

In Morocco today, where the most ostentatious luxury can be seen next to the most striking misery, there is no shortage of troubling issues. Recently the Moroccan king took a welcomed step by giving instructions that the requests for employment duly registered by some 85,000 young people holding at least the baccalaureate degree be fulfilled between now and 31 December. "This is not a bureaucratic gesture imposed from above and motivated by a perverse idea of social assistance," asserts Mr. Habib El Malki, a USFP central committee member and secretary general of the National Council on Youth and the Future.

What about respect for human rights? A very recent Amnesty International report reminds us that Morocco still has much to do before it is no longer a target. According to the humanitarian organization, "during the course of the last three months, more than 1,500 people have been arrested and more than 1,000 of them convicted for political offenses." Amnesty International adds that "prolonged detention of political prisoners, systematic resort to torture, unfair trials, and disappearances have continued without break for 30 years."

Mr. Basri complains that "Amnesty International has made no effort at analysis. Yet the situation has changed since March 1990." For his part, Mr. Abdelaziz Bennani,

vice president of the Moroccan Human Rights Organization (OMDH), notes "advances." He specifically cites the police custody system, detention conditions, the prevention of torture, and the creation of administrative courts. On 3 March Hassan II promised that these "suggestions" of the Consultative Council on Human Rights, created at his initiative in May 1990, "will be the object of constant legislative or statutory measures."

Even if "the Gulf war was able to change things a little bit in this area," as Mr. Bennani asserts, many others regret that the judges dealt with the Fes rioters in such a heavy-handed manner. Others express their disappointment that the king did not use the 30th anniversary of his ascension to the throne to announce the release of political prisoners, whose number is estimated at several hundred. The liberation of the Oufkir family left everyone dissatisfied.

"His Majesty is willing to examine the pardon requests of prisoners condemned for breach of the internal or external security of the state, submitted to him by the Consultative Council," according to those close to the palace. They add that "it is not out of the question that he may respond favorably. Give him a chance to seize opportunities" to exercise his clemency.

Are other opponents with Islamic tendencies in a position to contest the current order? Certainly during the Gulf war they tried, here and there, to make their complaints known, especially during the demonstration in Rabat. But the government has its eye on them and is working to contain any "budding peril." Thus the mosques are closed between prayers. As for the imams, they receive from the Ministry of the Interior, via the Ministry of Habous [religious property], a copy of the major themes of their Friday sermon. Dismissal or detention awaits one who strays from the official directives and turns to political-religious digressions.

"The political consensus" built around the Western Sahara question, which has severely affected political life since 1975, "must be reevaluated," remarks Mr. Yata. In his opinion, "the consensus is now in the midst of a political, economic, and social environment that has changed." In any case, viewed from Rabat, this thorny issue is in the process of being settled. It will be resolved either by a referendum this fall, if the United Nations considers the royal "reservations" (apparently this is what the king desires), or by a renouncement of this referendum, proscribed by the opposition parties who now feel it is "obsolete."

For the opposition parties, the only important issue is the legislative election planned for mid-1992, which had been postponed for two years under the pretext of the coming Western Sahara referendum. Hassan II promised on 3 March that the election would be "the object of special care" so that "its result would be the exact reflection of the deep aspirations of (our) people." In government circles they say they are ready "to remove all the ambiguities and, if necessary, consider reforming the

voting system and redrawing the districts." "We will be having our fifth pluralistic legislative election since 1963," states Mr. Basri. "In this matter Morocco's elections are run the most smoothly of the southern Mediterranean countries."

These proposals have not fallen on deaf ears. It is perhaps on this subject that the opposition parties run the risk of becoming the most combative in the coming months. The USFP and Istiqlal Parties are no longer willing to support a "system based on the falsification of elections," i.e., a false constitutional monarchy; they demand the establishment of "credible institutions."

During these last few months, popular attention was distracted by what was taking place in Baghdad. But as *LIBERATION*, the weekly USFP newspaper, recently noted, the manner in which the government in power played with public opinion finally brought the public face-to-face with "the hard reality" of a political system which, in two words or in 100, suffers from a curable malady—"the absence of democracy."

At the beginning of April, in an editorial on the front page of the daily *LE MATIN DU SAHARA*, which supposedly reflects palace views, Mr. Ahmed Alaoui, minister of state, expressed compassion for the sad fate of Africa, where, since independence, most countries "have known only repressive regimes." He wrote that the future "is not hard to predict; democracy, like liberty, is contagious." He could not have said it better.

TUNISIA

Islamist Student Union Activity 'Suspended'

91P40222A Paris *LE MONDE* in French
31 Mar-1 Apr 91 p 5

[Report by LE MONDE correspondent: "Tunisian Student Union Close to the Islamists Is 'Suspended'"]

[Text] Tunis—On 29 March, the government "suspended" the activities of the Tunisian General Students Union (UGTE)—one of two student organizations considered close to the Islamic Ennahdha Movement—and closed its offices.

This step followed the discovery at the beginning of the week of a veritable arsenal of molotov cocktails, gasoline- and vitriol-filled bottles, iron bars, chains, leaflets, posters, and banners "calling for violence and undermining the credibility of the government and state" in an office at the University of Tunis Faculty of Science and in the prayer rooms of several university residences.

Authorities affirmed that the locations where this materiel was stored had been made available to the UGTE. They accused this student organization of being the source of problems that the university has been experiencing prior to spring break, which ends on Monday. The press corps linked the recent acts of terrorism claimed by Ennahdha with the activity of the student Islamists.

However, during a press conference, the students maintained that they knew nothing about the source of the materiel uncovered. They stated: "We are against violence and our activity is carried out only within a trade union context."

BANGLADESH

Charges Against Ershad Detailed

91AS0757A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 19 Feb 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Anti-Corruption Bureau submitted chargesheet against former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad Sunday for acquiring property worth Taka 2 crore 21 lakh 65 thousand 238 illegally and dishonestly by abusing his power, reports BSS.

Besides amassing this property which is inconsistent with his known sources, the ex-president misappropriated gifts valued at Taka 11 lakh 2 thousand 500 violating the normal procedures and without depositing them with the government treasury, according to an official handout issued in Dhaka on Sunday.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau said it chargesheeted the ex-President on Sunday as the Prima facie case was found against him. The court will fix the date for hearing of the case, it added.

The handout said the Anti-Corruption Bureau instituted a case with Dhaka Cantonment than against ex-President Ershad on 8 January following recovery of hard cash worth Taka 1 crore 90 lakh 81 thousand 565 and a huge quantity of electronic goods, crockeries, furniture and other materials from his cantonment residence [as published]. The case was filed under Section 409 of the Penal Code and Section 5 (2) of the Anti-Corruption Act of 1947. The money and the valuable articles were beyond the known sources of income of the former President, it added.

Election Commissioner Speaks Prior to Polls

91AS0750A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 27 Feb 91 pp 1, 8

[Excerpt] The Chief Election Commissioner, Mr. Justice Abdur Rauf, on Tuesday made a clarion call to all political parties, their supporters and the contesting candidates to come forward being imbued, with patriotism and democratic spirit and rising above personal interest to make the parliamentary polls today (Wednesday) successful and meaningful, reports BSS.

In his address to the nation over Radio and television simultaneously on the eve of the Jatiya Sangsad election, Justice Rauf said it was the sacred responsibility and duty of every patriotic citizen to make good use of the opportunity that has come to us for a free, fair and impartial election.

Emphasising the importance of the role of every citizen in holding a free, fair and meaningful election, he said without active cooperation of the people of all strata it was not possible for the Election Commission alone to hold the polls successfully.

He congratulated the people for their great enthusiasm and response to election, and expressed his firm belief that their large scale participation in the polls would be able to remove the apprehension of all sorts of illegal election activities. [passage omitted]

He said considering the earnestness of the people regarding election results arrangements have been made for giving immediate unofficial results through frequent radio and television announcement beginning from the evening of the polling day till the last results.

Paying rich tributes to those courageous and brave sons through whose sacrifices, suffering and blood the country achieved the independence, he said February is a significant month in our national life in which the parliament election is going to be held. He also recalled that those known and unknown Shaheeds whose democratic infrastructure [as published].

Justice Rauf said this election has unique characteristics from a number of points of view.

Addressing, for the first time in the history of the nation the election is going to be held in a very congenial atmosphere under a non-partisan, neutral and interim caretaker government, he said.

The ECE [expansion not given] said the Election Commission was reconstituted with three sitting judges of the Supreme Court. He said those engaged in conducting the elections, had got the opportunity to work maintaining complete neutrality without any party influence.

Referring to the power of the Election Commission, Justice Rauf said all official and employees connected with the election process would be able to discharge their duties maintaining complete independence and neutrality and keeping themselves above all influences. He said for this purpose the power and control of the election and returning officer and all those connected with the election process have been strengthened further through promulgation of Election Officials (Special Rule) Ordinance, 1990.

He said due to neutral character of the Caretaker Government there was no scope for unwanted influence of the government on any election official.

Justice Rauf said there are more than 112,000 polling booths in more than 24,000 polling centres to facilitate about six crore 23 lakh voter to exercise their right of franchise.

He said 371,000 conducting election, he said 67 returning officers and 471 assistant returning officers have been appointed. The returning officers would be assisted by one presiding officer in each centre, and in every polling booth by one assistant presiding officer and two polling officers.

Referring to the security measures taken to ensure maintenance of law and order for holding the election properly, he said four lakh members, of the law enforcing agencies have been deployed.

The Armed Forces BDR, Police, Ansars and VDRs had taken spontaneous and laudable efforts in their respective fields, he added.

Justice Rauf said the Home Ministry has taken effective steps so that immediate appropriate actions could be taken by the law enforcing agencies to face any untoward situation.

Expressing determination of the Government and the Election Commission to hold free, fair, impartial and corruption free elections at any cost, Justice Rauf said the commission, if necessary, would not hesitate to conduct repeated polling in a centre but would not accept election results based on falsehood.

He said the concerned election officials have been given special instructions to take immediate and proper steps without any fear after evaluation of the events regarding polls in case of any untoward incident in any centre.

Justice Rauf said the Election Commission would not tolerate indecision, hesitation or any sort of partiality in taking appropriate steps regarding election. He said if the situation in any centre goes out of control, the Presiding Officer could suspend the polling on his own.

Urging the people to show respect to others' rights and opinions, the Chief Election Commissioner congratulated the political parties for their commitment to abide by the code of conduct compiled by the Election Commission on the basis of their recommendations. This code of conduct is a valuable addition in the election process of this year, he added.

Papers Report More Party Manifestos

Awami League

91AS0758A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 7 Feb 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Bangladesh Awami League in its election manifesto announced on Wednesday pledged to introduce parliamentary system of Government, restore the 1972 Constitution, ensure freedom of speech and the press, guarantee full independence of judiciary and repeal of all repressive and black laws.

The election manifesto of the party also committed to introduce market economy encouraging private sector and foreign investment for the rapid industrialisation. The Awami League announced that it would not go for nationalisation of industrial and commercial institutions pursuing the policy of decontrol of the national economy.

The Awami League manifesto reiterated to pursue non-aligned foreign policy with friendship to all and malice to

none. The party emphasised on further strengthening relations with OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] and SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries upholding the police of mutual respect for each other sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of any country [as published].

The election manifesto gave special emphasis to solve the country's flood problem on priority basis with international technical assistance and cooperation from neighbouring states. It also stressed on resolving the outstanding water sharing issue with a long term agreement with India ensuring Bangladesh's rightful share of waters.

The election manifesto of Bangladesh Awami League was announced at a crowded Press conference at Bangabandhu Bhavan where Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and other central leaders of the party were present. Mr. Ataur Rahman Kaiser, Finance and Planning Affairs Secretary of the party read out the election manifesto. Among others presidium member Dr. Kamal Hossain, Mr. Abdul Mannan, Women Affairs Secretary Begum Ivy Rahman and Mr. Mofizur Rahman, former Secretary and Vice-President of Islamic Development Bank (IDB) who joined Awami League recently.

The election manifesto pledged to establish a corruption-free administration accountable to the people where the institutional neutrality of the administrative machinery would be ensured and the officials in the administration be considered as servants of the republic and not of the Government. Decentralisation of power will be one of the main objectives of the administrative reorganisation.

The manifesto laid special emphasis on building a strong, efficient, well trained and disciplined armed forces to defend the country from external aggression. The political neutrality of the Armed Forces will be ensured according to the Constitution and all necessary measures will be taken so that the Armed Forces can perform their duty efficiently.

On industrial sector, the policy of the Awami League as announced in the manifesto would be to introduce a competitive market based on mixed economy. It will give special importance on the private sector for the growth of export oriented industries. It favoured creation of appropriate climate for investment in the country to ensure confidence of the investors. Simultaneous importance will also be given on the growth and expansion of the small and cottage industries by liberalising industrial credit policy. The manifesto, however, believed in the competition of private sector with the public sector. The party will not pursue the policy of wholesale denationalisation to serve the interest of a particular group or individual.

Replying to a question whether her party would ensure the freedom of the Press and news media including that of radio and television and repeal the Special Powers Act, the Awami League chief said that the election manifesto of her party had pledged to ensure the

freedom of speech and the press and she would repeal all repressive and black laws as well as the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution that gave immunity to the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

About the special Powers Act she asked the questioner whether he wanted to release ousted President Ershad by repealing this act now. She pointed out that without the Special Powers Act the ousted President and his collaborators could not be arrested and detained.

Referring to the demand for transferring Ershad to Dhaka Central Jail, the Awami League chief said that stress should be given not for his transfer to jail now but to expedite the trial of Ershad to punish him and send him to Central Jail. Replying to a question she said that she had repeatedly demanded immediate trial of Ershad according to law.

Asked whether Awami League would introduce socialism and go for nationalisation Sheikh Hasina said that the concept of socialism had changed in the world now and Awami League could not ignore this change.

Replying to a question whether Awami League would ban religious based parties Sheikh Hasina said that her party was against the use of religion in politics but it would respect and allow the rights of parties in a multi-party democracy to practice their political ideologies.

Asked to comment on the demand to ban Jatiya Party of ousted President Ershad, the Awami League chief said that it was known to everyone the excess of Jatiya Party in killing the democracy and destroying the national economy but in a democratic system it was difficult to ban a party. She observed that if any party had to be banned then all forces who came to power unconstitutionally and floated political parties to perpetuate their illegal rule should be banned.

Replying to a question Sheikh Hasina said that Awami League had not sold party nominations to the collaborators of Ershad. On the other hand, she added, a particular party had sold nominations to 93 Ershad's men violating the public commitment of the three alliances.

Muslim League-Kazi Kader

91AS0758B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Feb 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Bangladesh Muslim League [BML] (Kazi Kader) on Thursday announced its election manifesto pledging to turn the country into an Islamic Republic based on the Quran and Sunnah, reports BSS.

Announcing the election manifesto at his Gulshan residence in Dhaka, Muslim League chief Kazi Abdul Kader told newsmen, if voted to power, his party would recast the constitution in the light of the Holy Quran and formulate the state principles based on the Quran and Sunnah. Bangladesh Muslim League (BML) believes that Allah is the source of sovereign power and the Quran is the only source of all laws, Kazi Kader said.

He said BML would establish a mutually accountable system of government with a happy combination of presidential and parliamentary systems as only the presidential system or absolutely the parliamentary system of government was ineffective in the socio-economic and political reality of our country.

The other salient features of the election manifesto of Muslim League are, annulment of all black laws, free economy with rapid industrialisation building friendship with foreign powers on the basis of sovereign equality, modernisation of Armed Forces and compulsory military training, independence of judiciary and freedom of the Press.

Kazi Kader said the Armed Forces would be modernised with sophisticated weapons for protecting the independence and sovereignty of the country.

The BML would introduce compulsory education for all in the age group between 20 and 30 years, he said.

All the colonial black laws including the Printing Presses Act of 1973 and Special Powers Act of 1974 would be repealed to ensure the freedom of press, the BML chief said.

The judiciary would be completely separated from the executive, he said adding that Panchayet System would be introduced in union level.

The Muslim League is determined to build a free, self-reliant economic infrastructure as import based trade and loan based planning can not make any welfare to the country.

Kazi Kader said his party would take effective measures to minimise trade deficit.

The Muslim League would revitalise the agriculture sector by ensuring due price of agro-products exempting agriculture loan up to Taka five thousand and rearranging the agriculture loan system, Kazi Kader said.

Regarding land reform and food production, Kazi Kader said taxes on agricultural land up to 25 bighas would be exempted and long-term planning would be framed for attaining food-autarky.

The unemployment problem would be eradicated through rapid industrialisation the Muslim League chief said adding that unemployment allowance and social security scheme would be introduced if the party went to power.

Financial allocation would be increased in the education sector and the education at all the levels would be kept under state control, he said.

The Muslim League would ensure proper medical facilities for the people up to village level and establish four medical universities in the four divisions, the party chief added.

The main objective of the foreign policy of the BML "is friendship to all but malice to none," Kazi Kader said.

"We want to forge friendship with the neighbouring countries in the spirit of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation]" he said and added that Muslim League wanted "meaningful friendship" with India. Without proper solution to the problems of Farakka Barrage, Tin Bigha corridor, Angorpota, Dahagram and sheltering the outlawed Shanti Bahinies, the relationship with India would not be friendly, he said.

The Secretary General of the BML Mr. Jamir Ali was present on the occasion.

Bangladesh Communist Party

91AS0758C Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 11 Feb 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Sunday pleaded for setting up a government of national resurgence for a specific time on the basis of consensus of pro-liberation democratic forces on some important political economic and social issues, reports BSS.

In its election manifesto released in Dhaka on Sunday, the party said such a government was needed to clean the vices of indiscipline, irregularities and plundering of resources of the ousted President Ershad and his accomplices.

Outlining a 15 point programme encompassing all aspects of national life including political, social economic, defence and foreign policy, the CPB pledged to restore parliamentary democracy, and spirit of the Liberation War with a view to stopping recurrence of military coup for changing power.

It promised to do away with all the constitutional amendments that changed fundamental elements of democracy, including secularism.

The CPB pledged to repeal Special Powers Act, Press and Publications Act, Drama Control Ordinance, besides all other draconian laws contrary to fundamental rights.

It said none would be detained without trial for an indefinite period nor ban could be imposed on any political party without specific allegation in accordance with constitutional provision.

The manifesto said the party would ensure full freedom of the press and make the Press council more active so that the press behave with responsibility while the radio and television would be converted into autonomous organisation.

On defence policy, the CPB said it is in favour of building a strong and effective defence force free from politics so that the army is not used in unconstitutional activities for political end.

On the economic front, the CPB would take immediate and necessary steps to remove poverty increasing the

growth rate. The party emphasised on removing the past irregularities and indiscipline, particularly those of the Ershad regime.

With a view to building an infrastructure, the CPB proposed for giving democracy an institutional shape at all levels through free and fair elections.

The manifesto outlined several steps including reduction of expenses in the unproductive sector, attainment of optimum level of production, increasing savings and exports, mobilisation of internal resources, stopping wastage and removing the state of anarchy in the banking sector.

It said the foreign aid has to be continued consistent with national priority while public sector is to be made more efficient and a profitable concern.

Jatiya Party

91AS0758D Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 11 Feb 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Jatiya Party Sunday announced a 12-point election manifesto opting for a democratic system with balance of power between the President and the Parliament and other representative units from the lowest level reports BSS.

The party manifesto announced at a crowded press conference in Dhaka was read out by Mr. Syed Tarek, a JP [Jatiya Party] leader. Among others, Acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and some central leaders were present.

The manifesto said it would give a solid foundation to the philosophical ideology which had emerged in the social and administrative system with the introduction of upazila system. The party would also ensure equal rights of all irrespective of men and women, caste and creed and religion.

The Jatiya Party would establish an economic system suiting the democratic system after freeing the industrial and agriculture sectors from stagnation and indiscipline. It would also improve the living standard of all and create employment opportunities for them, the manifesto said.

It further suggested a number of measures for the uplift of the country's economy with the successful utilisation of vast manpower.

On the agriculture policy the JP manifesto said it would further expand the land reform and fully implement the same to bring about a change in the agriculture system and increase agricultural production.

It would distribute the khas and other land including fallow land among the landless peasants and create more cluster villages. The party would also encourage the farmers to set up cooperative system of farming.

The manifesto said the JP would pursue a non-aligned foreign policy with a motto of "friendship to all and malice to none." It would develop friendly relationship with the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries and China on the basis of mutual recognition of each other's national sovereignty and national integrity and stability of internal politics.

The party would consolidate special friendship with all the Muslim countries.

270 JP candidates

Mr. Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Acting Chairman of the Jatiya Party, said in Dhaka Sunday that his party has nominated 270 persons to contest the coming parliamentary polls.

Addressing a press conference at his Gulshan residence shortly after announcing the party manifesto in Dhaka Sunday afternoon, Mr. Chowdhury said 174 former MPs [Members of Parliament] have also been nominated by the Party.

Mr. Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said his party had not formed any electoral alliance with any other party for the coming polls. "We can form the alliance with like minded parties if they have the similar kind of manifesto," he added.

Asked whether Awami League had brought them in the election field, Mr. Chowdhury replied in the negative and said, "we ourselves had decided to contest the election and none had brought us here in the election fray in their laps."

Asked whether there were any similarities between the 18-point programme of Jatiya Party and 19-point programme of the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party], the JP leader said, "you can draw your own conclusion."

Regarding the absconding ministers, the Acting Chairman said, "They have sent us the nomination papers and we have nominated them. We do not know about their whereabouts nor do we have any contact with them."

Zaker Party

91AS0758E Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 12 Feb 91 pp 1, 4

[Text] The Zaker Party on Monday announced its election manifesto for the coming parliamentary polls with a pledge to establish Islamic rule in the country through an administrative system based on the Quran and Sunnah, reports BSS.

Announcing the manifesto at the party's Banani office in Dhaka Pirzada Mostafa Amir Faisal, member of the Supreme Presidium of Zaker Party, said, if voted to power, his party would ensure the freedom and rights of all religious communities in the country.

The main features of the 26-point election manifesto of the party are: establishing a responsible democratic government, making the administration responsible to the Parliament, preserving multi-party democratic system, freedom of the press, pursuing a strong foreign policy and strengthening the defence system for protecting the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and meeting the basic needs of the people.

Zaker Party would make constitutional arrangements for holding all national elections under neutral governments, Mr. Faisal said.

He said the judiciary would be completely free from the control of the executive.

Mr. Faisal said his party would establish an efficient and corruption-free administrative system by restoring order in all spheres of administration. Corruption in a section of life would be uprooted, he added.

Regarding the foreign policy, Mr. Faisal said friendly relations would be established with all the countries on the basis of equal status. Specially deep and strong relations would be established with the Islamic countries.

Food, clothings, education, medical facilities, work for the unemployed people and shelter for each family would be arranged, the Zaker Party leader said adding that a policy of balanced development would be followed for all the regions and communities.

Programmes would be taken for attaining self-sufficiency in food, clothings, medicine, power and production of house building materials within shortest possible time, he said.

Mr. Faisal said interest-free agricultural loan and crop loan would be introduced and arrangements made for repayment of the loans with crops along with the present system of repaying with money. The non-realized agricultural loan till now would be exempted, he said.

Ganatantri Party

91AS0758F Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 23 Feb 91 p 3

[Text] Ganatantri Party President Syed Altaf Hossain on Wednesday announced the election manifesto of the party with a commitment of introducing parliamentary system of government, reorganisation of administration, and independence of the judiciary, reports BSS.

The manifesto said democratic ideals should be implemented and reflected in every sphere of national life, rule of law should be established and the judiciary must be separated from the administration, a Press release said.

It said the administration should be reorganised to raise efficiency and sense of responsibility of the officials and the employees.

The party also assured for a mixed economy where private sector, state owned, and cooperative organisations would be encouraged to boost economic activities in the country.

The agricultural sector, the party would provide subsidy to different agricultural inputs and make them available to the farmers to increase agricultural production and at the same time efforts would be taken to ensure fair price of the products.

Regarding market control the party would form a council consisting of the industrialists, businessmen and the consumers to check prices.

It would also set up cottage industries in the rural areas and provide soft loans to the educated unemployed youths for establishing industries and business firms on joint ownership with a view to creating employment opportunities.

If the party is voted to power Syed Altaf Hossain said his party would send both skilled and unskilled man-power abroad, protect the women and children from social harassment, repeal the vested property law, improve health services, take flood control measures and develop infrastructure and communication facilities.

Regarding defence services of the country the party said the defence forces would be built as a patriotic, disciplined and modern force to safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

The party's foreign policy would be "friendship to all and malice to none" saving the national interest and sovereignty of the country.

Bangladesh Bank Reports Growth in GDP

91AS0759A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 7 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Bangladesh's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew 5.8 percent in fiscal 1989/90 against 2.3 percent in the previous year, Bangladesh Bank said in its annual report published Wednesday, reports BSS.

The growth of the agriculture sector was estimated at 5.6 percent in the year compared with 0.02 percent rise in 1988/89 when production was hampered by unprecedented floods.

In industrial sector the growth was recorded at 8.4 percent in 1989/90 against 2.3 percent in the previous year, the Bank said.

The construction sector grew 9 percent in the year compared with 5.9 percent in 1988/89.

The Bank said the growth in transport and communications sector was 6 percent in 1989/90 against 5 percent a year ago.

It said the growth of power and gas sector dropped to 16.7 percent in 1989/90 from 25.8 percent in the previous year.

The combined growth of other sectors stood at 4.9 percent in 1989/90 against 3.4 percent in the previous year.

Correspondent on Conduct of Elections

91AS0756A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 28 Feb 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Sporadic incidents of polls violence across the country left at least one dead and one hundred others injured on Wednesday, according to reports reaching Dhaka from various parts of the country. A total of about 600 persons were held on various charges including attempts of casting false vote and stuffing of ballot papers, sources added.

Election was suspended in several centres including 11 places in Anwara, Rauzan, Satkania, Lohagara and Sandwip in Chittagong. Election was also suspended in some centres including Daudkandi, Comilla, Gaffargaon, Mymensingh and Sandwip. It was temporarily disrupted also in Lalkuthir, Farashganj and Keraniganj. Later with following timely action of the members of law enforcing agencies, election resumed in Karaniganj and Lalkuthir centres.

When contacted one highly placed source of the Ministry of Home Described holding of Wednesday's polls an unique example in the history. He had words of appreciation for democratic behaviour demonstrated by political parties and cooperation extended by all concerned in holding peaceful polls. He highly praised the role of the members of the law enforcing agencies in maintaining law and order on the day.

Our Chittagong Office reported killing of Sirajul Islam by supporters of rival party at a tea stall at Mokdharpara island, Sandwip. Thirty persons were injured in Clashes between supporters of mainly Awami League and BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] in different areas under Chittagong, the report added.

Despite reports of sporadic clashes between supporters of rival candidates the turn out of voters was spontaneous and very high in different parts of the country. The polling officials indicated costing of about 60 percent votes in different places, according to preliminary unofficial estimates.

Three persons including east Gujra Union Parishad Chairman under Rauzan Upazila were also seriously injured in a clash between two rival groups of people. Eight persons were injured when Army opened fire to disperse several hundred unruly people at Malghar Primary School centre of coastal Anowara upazila. Seven persons were also injured in a brick batting between Awami League and Jamaat-e-Islam supporters at

Musapur of Sandwip upazila. The Rauzan police reportedly seized a jeep (Chatta Kha 5539) with six armed persons including the jeep driver from west Gahira of Rauzan upazila the seized jeep reportedly belong to Rauzan candidate Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury (NAP) [National Awami Party]. The police sources said that the jeep carrying armed persons was on the way to a centre to under polling.

The polling at five centres have been suspended in view of the violent situation. There the suspended polling centres are Malghart Primary School centre Khansama Primary School centre and Buramsara Primary School centre in Anowara upazial east Gujra Mohammadia Primary School centre and West Gujra Primary School centre at Rauzan. The polling at Haitagao Chowdhury Primary centre of Patiya upazila kept suspended for about two hours due to disturbance created by some unruly people. At Malghar Primary School centre ballot paper, were snatched away by some unruly people. Then the presiding officer at that centre has no option without closing down the polling. Two unruly persons were also taken into custody by the police from that centre in Chittagong district, the police arrested as many as 35 persons of whom the maximum number of thirteen persons are from Rauzan upazila on charge of creating violence. The Chittagong Metropolitan police also rounded up 30 persons including Assistant presiding officer Mohammed Nur of Lalkhan Primary School centre. Mohammad Nur went out of the polling centre reportedly to canvas for his favourite candidate.

The Chandgao police arrested Chhatra League leader Kamal and Juba League leader Jahangir the police also demolished an unauthorised election camp set up there reportedly within the range of four hundred yards of the centre. There was also skirmish between the supporters of Awami League and BNP.

Barring those stray incidents the polling in Chittagong city more or less passed off.

During my visit to national Primary School centre Aparna Charan Girls High School centre, Goalpara Railway Hospital school centre Pahartali Shahid Lane Primary School centre and South Kobmale Primary School centre 11 was huge turn up of voters to cast their votes.

At some centres I saw the police taking a few people into custody for their attempt to cast false votes. In my presence, the police picked up three persons and took them into custody.

Meanwhile, our correspondent from Sylhet reported arrest of six persons and charge of attempted casting of false vote.

Our Khulna office reported arrest of 198 persons from Khulna Metropolitan area on charges of creating troubles in polling centres in attempt to cast false vote.

Our SSMCH [expansion not given] correspondent reports: Five persons were taken to Mitford and Dhaka Medical College Hospital with injuries following clashes between rival workers in different city area. Of them two were released after first aid while one person with head injury was shifted to PG Hospital.

INDIA

President Speaks on Parliament Opening

91AS0693A New Delhi PATRIOT in English
22 Feb 91 p 5

[Following is the text of President R. Venkataraman's address to the joint session of Parliament on Thursday; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Honourable members,

It is my privilege to welcome you to this new session of Parliament. I wish you the very best for the successful completion the budgetary and Legislative business before you.

You are meeting at a time of great stress and challenge. The unity and integrity of the country are under severe threat. Communal and fissiparous elements pose a menace to the nation. The economic situation is a difficult one. Inflation and an adverse balance of payments position, aggravated by the Gulf crisis, are matters of grave concern. The post World War II structure of international relations has undergone a profound transformation and the new evolving pattern will pose fresh challenges for us.

The situation with which we are faced demands, more than ever before, that the people of India come together as one to lift the country out of its present crisis and set it on the road to prosperity and progress. We must set aside internal differences, and petty squabbles, all that is narrow, selfish and divisive and rise as one people in the interest of our nation. In these difficult times we must reaffirm our commitment to the basic principles—democracy, secularism and socialism—the very pillars of our nationhood.

The overall law and order situation in the country deteriorated last year. Violence in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab has continued. There was a sharp rise in the activities of the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] in Assam. The communal scene deteriorated during the second half of the year and caste violence also increased. Andhra Pradesh and Bihar remained affected by extremist violence.

The situation in Punjab is being constantly reviewed. The Government shares the grief and sorrow of all those who have been victims of the senseless violence unleashed by terrorists. Government is determined to put down terrorism and secessionism with a firm hand. Security measures have been tightened with a view to curbing terrorism and restoring peaceful conditions.

Intensive combing operations are being undertaken. Steps have been taken to check infiltration and smuggling of arms and ammunition from across the border. The Government is of the opinion that the Punjab problem needs a political solution and has therefore taken a number of initiatives from holding discussions with even the militants for the purpose of drawing them into the mainstream of peaceful democratic activities.

Jammu and Kashmir

In Jammu and Kashmir, secessionists and certain fundamentalist elements, aided and abetted from across the border, have been carrying out terrorist and subversive activities for quite some time. The Government feels that if extraneous assistance to the extremists is eliminated a great deal of subversive activities in Jammu and Kashmir will abate. The Government hopes that the dialogues with our neighbouring country will bring about a change in the situation and lead to a restoration of normal life in the State.

During the year there was an increase in the secessionists activities in Assam. A situation was created in which elections to the State Assembly could not be held in a free and fair manner and the Government of the State could not be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. President's rule was, therefore, imposed and the State Assembly was suspended. To deal with the secessionists, the State of Assam was declared a "disturbed area" and ULFA declared an unlawful association. Army and central paramilitary forces have been deployed with visible success. Elections will be held as soon as conditions become conducive to their being conducted in a free and fair manner.

The Government wishes to reiterate its firm resolve to find an acceptable solution to the problems in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam within the framework of the Constitution of India.

Sri Lanka

With the worsening situation in the North-Eastern province of Sri Lanka, there has been large scale influx of refugees, mainly into the state of Tamil Nadu. Besides the refugees, many militant LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] cadres have been attempting to use places in Tamil Nadu as a base for their activities. Despite the concern expressed by the Central Government, the situation in Tamil Nadu continued to deteriorate and it was generally perceived that the LTTE could carry on their activity with impunity. In one unfortunate incident the LTTE cadres were able to not only kill 15 persons of a rival Tamil group but also escaped.

Policing in sensitive coastal areas left much to be desired and offers of assistance from the Centre were not availed of by the State Government. Reports of several unlawful activities on the part of the LTTE and the failure of the State Government to discharge its primary duty of maintaining public order had left the Government with no other alternative but to impose the President's rule in

the State of Tamil Nadu. Government, however, is keen to restore a popular Government in the State as early as possible.

Communal harmony in the country has been vitiated mainly due to the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid controversy. The Government has taken a fresh initiative to resolve the issue through discussions with religious leaders and others so that a mutually acceptable solution can be evolved. It is the firm resolve of the Government to ensure absolute equality of treatment to the people belonging to all religions without discrimination and to promote communal harmony in the whole country [as published].

In my address to you in March last year, I had mentioned about the Government's intention to set up an inter-state council to serve as a forum for better coordination between states and for securing consensus on issues of national importance. I am glad that the council [has] been set up and it has held its first meeting in October 1990.

Economy

The economic situation in the country causes grave concern. The budgetary deficits, the oil crisis, the deteriorating balance of payments and the spiral of inflation have caused untold hardships to the people, more particularly the vulnerable sections of the society. The Government has launched a multi-pronged strategy for combating these ills which includes—inter alia—drastic curtailment of public expenditure and money supply, improved management of supply and demand of essential commodities in the short run and increased production in the long run. Fiscal imbalances continuously indulged in the past have left a legacy of inflation behind. These cannot be corrected overnight or by a single stroke of action. Hard options and stern correctives need to be applied to retrieve the situation. The Government had announced a package of measures in December 1990 to mobilise additional revenues and curb expenditure during 1991. There is an urgent need for a national effort to tackle the daunting situation. It is proposed to set up a national reconstruction fund to supplement budgetary resources for development work and reconstruction of damaged public property.

The balance of payments has come under further strain and there is likelihood of an additional burden of over Rs [rupees] 6,000 crore being imposed on account of Gulf crisis. It is a matter of satisfaction that our advance planning to deal with any contingency arising out of the Gulf crisis has stood us in good stead. We have taken timely action to ensure that our stocks of petroleum products remain at a satisfactory level. Measures being taken to relieve the strain on the balance of payments in the short term include export promotion, import restraints and securing larger foreign capital inflows.

Trade

The foreign trade situation this year is not a happy one, exports grew at only 12.9 percent in dollar terms in the period April-November, 1990 over the corresponding period last year, while imports grew by 20.4 percent. However, there were some positive trends and exports of a few products registered impressive growth. The export performance of engineering goods, cotton fabrics and readymade garments, leather and leather manufacturers and marine products has been encouraging.

The government will accord high priority to export efforts. Larger industrial houses in particular will be required to improve their contribution to exports. Continuous attention will be paid to upgradation of technology and improvement of quality to ensure competitiveness of Indian industry. Efforts will be made to restructure the industrial sector whenever necessary to improve overall efficiency. The export strategy for 1991-92 prepared by the government incorporates these considerations.

It is against this background of a difficult economic situation that we are engaged in formulating the eighth five-year Plan. The situation, though grim, need not cause despondency. Our economy and polity have the resilience to cope with the current difficulties. Our greatest asset is our manpower which we can utilise to our advantage. Our performance in the agricultural sector also imparts strength to our economy. Most parts of the country experienced a good south-west monsoon. The prospects of rabi crops also appear bright. The foodgrain production in the current year may be around 175.5 million tonnes. Our reserve of foodstock are at a satisfactory level.

Eighth Plan

The plan document will be finalised by March 1991. Its main thrust will be on removal of mass poverty, expansion of opportunities of productive employment and meeting the basic needs for our people. Given the resource constraints, we are required to evolve a much tighter scheme of priorities. Essential infrastructure, particularly energy, completion of ongoing projects, irrigation, food security at the household level, safe drinking water, primary health care, primary education and the welfare and development of dalits and tribals, women and children would receive priority in the eighth plan. The other key features of the eighth Plan will be protection of the environment and prevention of degradation of land and water resources. Maximum use of science and technology to improve agricultural productivity and rural economy. More systematic attention towards agricultural research, strengthening the agricultural credit system, special focus on maximising returns from investments already made through better productivity and efficient management and appropriate decentralisation of development administration. Government accord

very high priority to agricultural development. The agricultural policy resolution is expected to be placed before Parliament in this session itself.

Sound water management is vital for increasing agricultural productivity. Efforts will be made to augment water resources with special attention to minor irrigation and to better utilise the available supplies through scientific methods like sprinkle irrigation, etc.

During the year 1990-91, a number of steps have been taken to diversify and give a new direction to the integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). These include the extension of group approach for larger coverage of women under the IRDP to all districts and earmarking of 3 percent target for the physically handicapped persons. The target of coverage of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe families and of women has been increased. Under the programme of Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (Trysem), it has been decided to double the number of trainees during 1991-92. The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has been continued.

The government will take necessary measures to accelerate the pace of industrial development. To provide further impetus to industrial growth, particularly in backward areas, government has decided to implement the new growth centres scheme throughout the country during the 8th Plan. Government will also lay emphasis on rural industrialisation, particularly through development of khadi and village industries. Every endeavour will be made to promote the development of the small scale sector which has been playing an important role in employment generation and in the country's export efforts. A statement on industrial policy will be placed before Parliament in this session.

The Government is aware of the tremendous growth potential of the electronics industry, particularly in the area of exports, and will take measures to ensure that this potential is realised. It will be the endeavour of the Government to develop the textile sector and food processing industries.

The Government will pay close attention to the infrastructure sector. Coal resources will be developed and power generation stepped up. In the area of mineral development the productive process will be modernised. Self-sufficiency in steel will be the aim through modernisation and expansion of capacity. The Government attaches utmost importance to stepping up indigenous production of crude oil. Even while encouraging oil conservation measures, Government is conscious of the need to protect industrial and agricultural production. Special priority will be accorded to the requirements of the agricultural sector. Efforts to promote the use of non-conventional and renewable energy sources will continue. In the area of communication, Government will take necessary steps to provide for the rapid expansion of telecommunication services.

Public Sector

The public sector continues to play a pivotal role in the economic development of the nation. There is, however, considerable scope for improving the performance of the public sector enterprises. The current strategy of improving efficiency through the system of memorandum of understanding will be further extended to cover more undertakings.

Our scientists have played a crucial role in the country's development efforts. The successful launching of INSAT-1D [Indian Satellite System-1D] in June, 1990, has been a very significant achievement. The development of INSAT-2 satellite and the design development of the second generation IRS [Indian Remote Sensing] series of satellites is progressing satisfactorily.

In biotechnology, one of the most important emerging fields of science and technology, rapid advances are being made in upstream areas like immunology, protein engineering and human genetics. It will be the aim of our science policy to use scientific development for tangible benefits to the people.

The pattern of development which we should aim at must be a sustainable one, development which destroys the environment destroys the very basis of life and is self-defeating. Major initiatives are on the anvil to protect the environment. A ten-year National Forestry Action Plan has been prepared with emphasis on people's participation. A conservation strategy is being formulated to form an integrated framework for development planning. The policy on prevention and abatement of pollution will promote technological inputs and preventive measures for waste minimisation. Environment-friendly products will be identified to encourage manufacture and use of products less harmful to the environment. The concept of civil liability will be codified to help provide relief to those who suffer environmental damage.

An important task before the government is to provide effective relief to the victims of the gas tragedy at Bhopal. No effort will be spared to secure fair compensation for the unfortunate victims and their families.

Armed Forces

Our armed forces have done us proud. Their valour, professional skill and devotion to duty have stood India in good stead. The nation acknowledges with gratitude the sacrifices which they have made for the motherland. The morale of our armed forces is high and they are ready to meet any external threat successfully. The government continues to attach high priority to welfare schemes, both for serving and retired personnel.

We can also look back with a sense of pride to the notable landmarks achieved by our scientists and technologists towards self-reliance in meeting the critical requirements of our armed forces. Spectacular progress

has been made in the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme [IGMDP]. Having successfully flight tested surface-to-surface missile 'Prithvi' and re-entry technology demonstrator project 'Agni' last year, we have been successful, this year, in flight testing the medium range surface-to-air missile 'Akash' and the third generation anti-tank missile 'Nag'.

Our efforts at preserving the unity and integrity of the country, and our efforts at economic development, can be successful in the long run only with the wholehearted involvement of the people. Our democratic policy provides the framework for people's participation in the nation building process. Government is committed to strengthening democratic institutions and in creating conditions which will make democracy more vibrant and real.

Our labour force, both in the industrial and agricultural sectors, is perhaps the most important segment of our population. Upon their sweat and toil rest the fortunes of this country. Amidst all the social turmoil, industrial relations in the country have been marked by stability. This is reflective of the maturity that our industrial system has acquired over the years. All efforts will be made to ensure that rights of workers are protected and that they get their due share. Special attention will be paid to the enforcement of labour laws for special categories of unorganised labour.

The task of strengthening democracy can never be complete without the full involvement of the nation's youth. We must provide our youth every opportunity for their development and progress. We must create for them conditions in which they can use their skills for their own advancement, the advancement of society, and the advancement of the country. Government will pay special attention to the generation of productive employment opportunities for youth in both urban and rural areas. It will be the endeavour of government to involve youth more closely in efforts at fostering national integration and strengthening the unity of the country. A meeting of the National Youth Council was held recently. Its deliberations will be taken into account in formulating a national policy for youth.

It is a matter of concern that women continue to be discriminated against and are subject to many indignities. Government will take decisive action to protect women and secure for them their rights. The socioeconomic rights of women and the rights of children in terms of access to nutrition, health, education and security would receive urgent consideration of the government. Steps have also been taken to improve the condition of female child, in the context of the celebration of 1990 as the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] year of the Girl Child.

Tribal Development

The nation cherishes the memory of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. His portrait was unveiled in the central hall of Parliament on April 12, 1990. On April 14, 1990, the nation's

highest honour, the Bharat Ratna, was conferred on Dr Ambedkar. Government is fully alive to the urges and aspirations of the weaker sections and backward classes and is committed to protect and promote their interests and help provide them with productive employment. Efforts will be made to make the Scheduled Castes Special Component Plan and the Tribal Sub Plan more effective with a view to promoting economic well-being, educational advancement and removal of social disabilities of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups among the scheduled tribes, such as primary tribes and groups, shifting cultivators and bonded labourers would continue to receive special attention of the government. The development of predominantly tribal areas is a matter of special concern to the government. It will be the endeavour of the government to ensure that the pace of development of these areas is accelerated and that regional imbalances are rectified.

The public distribution system has played a useful role, particularly in times of scarcity. Its effectiveness requires to be enhanced further. Government is convinced that the public distribution system must become a major component of our strategy for growth and social justice. The government's thrust will be to target the public distribution system in a meaningful way to serve the needs of the poor, especially in rural areas. Government is vigilant in protecting the interests of the consumer and all steps will be taken to check blackmarketing and hoarding.

Health Care, Education, and Housing

It will be the endeavour of the government to expand the coverage of health care and improve its quality. Greater emphasis will be laid on the promotion of indigenous systems of medicine and the out-reach of primary health care services to the poor sections of society. Improvement in health services for children and mothers will be an important component of programmes in the health sector. Greater emphasis will be given to reducing the growth rate of population so that the benefits of our development efforts are not diluted by ever-increasing numbers.

The bedrock of democracy is education and literacy. Mass illiteracy and low standards of education are major impediments to the successful implementation of programmes geared towards upliftment of the weaker sections and the creation of a more just social order. The removal of illiteracy will be a major thrust area. Government will launch a new programme to eradicate illiteracy and will seek the cooperation of universities, schools and voluntary agencies in this endeavour. The government will accord the highest priority to primary education and vocationalisation of secondary education.

Government accords great importance to creating facilities to help people secure adequate housing. A national housing policy is being formulated. It is proposed to step up allotment of house sites to rural landless families by

conferring homestead rights on them. Construction assistance will also be stepped up under the minimum needs programme. The programme and construction of night shelters in urban areas will be expanded.

Commitment to Peace

The international situation has witnessed rapid changes. The cold war has waned and is replaced by greater understanding and cooperation between nations which were arrayed in opposite camps. This poses new challenges and offers opportunities for our foreign policy. Our approach continues to be firmly rooted to the principles of non-alignment and to peace, disarmament and a more just and equitable world order. As a member of the UN Security Council since January 1991, we will continue to strive for the achievement of these objectives and uphold the purposes and principles of the UN charter.

The government attaches the highest priority to improving relations with our neighbours and strengthening the process of regional cooperation, consistent with global trends. The South Asian region is one of the world's poorest. Peace and stability in our region are indispensable for development and for achieving a fair standard of life for our people.

A renewed impetus has been given to the process of regional cooperation of the 5th SAARC summit in Male held after a gap of almost two years. At our initiative, the summit agreed to consider some fresh approaches and extend cooperation to some new areas. We are confident, that given the political will, SAARC can move towards cooperation in core economic areas of direct benefit to our peoples.

We look forward to working closely with the democratically elected government of Bangladesh for resolving outstanding issues through dialogue and further strengthening our bilateral cooperation.

Our close relations with Bhutan and the Maldives have been maintained and strengthened through high level dialogue.

We have welcomed the adoption of multi-party democracy in Nepal. Our traditionally close bilateral relationship with Nepal has been restored. The significance we attach to our relations with that country is underlined by the fact that our Prime Minister's first bilateral visit was to Nepal. We look forward to expanding our cooperation with Nepal in several areas including harnessing the waters of our common rivers and protection and management of the environment.

Notwithstanding Pakistan's support to terrorist and secessionist activities in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, we have continued our endeavour to reduce tension with Pakistan and have agreed to resume discussions over a wide range of bilateral issues. We have impressed on the government of Pakistan the need to abide fully by the Simla government. We hope that the government of

Pakistan will be guided by the longer term interests of the two countries and both our peoples.

Hostilities in the north-east province of Sri Lanka have led to a heavy influx of Sri Lankan refugees into India. We have conveyed our concern and stressed the need for a peaceful political settlement which meets the legitimate aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils within the framework of Sri Lanka's unity and integrity.

Our traditional friendship with Afghanistan was further strengthened with the visit of President Najibullah to New Delhi in August, 1990. We hope that bloodshed and violence in Afghanistan will cease. The need of the hour is a political solution, arrived at by the Afghans themselves, that would ensure Afghanistan's status as a sovereign, independent and non-aligned country.

We have continued the process of seeking a better understanding with China. Our bilateral cooperation has grown and we have also begun to consult each other more closely on international issues. Negotiations in the joint working group are continuing with a view to resolving the boundary question in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner. We believe that closer cooperation between India and China will be in the interest of peace and stability in Asia and the world.

We have a special relationship with the Soviet Union and our bilateral cooperation extends over a wide range. We wish the Soviet government and people well in their efforts to bring about political, economic and social transformation. The Soviet Union has stood by India in times of need, and we will reciprocate their warmth and friendship with understanding and cooperation at all times.

There has been a steady improvement in our relations with the United States of America. There is now a better understanding of each other's concerns and interests. The United States is our largest trading partner and an important source of high technology. We look forward to developing our cooperation further in areas of mutual interest.

Japan has emerged as one of our major economic partners. As an Asian country, we admire the progress that she has made and look forward to further expansion of bilateral cooperation. A closer partnership between India and Japan would be a positive factor for peace and progress.

We have welcomed the unification of Germany which is an event of great historic significance. We look forward to the forthcoming visit of the President of Germany to India and to the expansion of our close and cordial relations with the unified Germany. Our friendly relations and cooperation with other European nations have been maintained and strengthened.

Gulf War

We are deeply concerned at the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf in spite of all efforts, including our own, to avert this tragic turn of events. The conflict is fraught with grave consequences for international peace and security and for the world economy. The economies of the developing nations in particular will be seriously affected. We hope that hostilities will cease. We are continuing our efforts, in consultation with the chairman and members of the nonaligned movement for an immediate ceasefire and simultaneous announcement by Iraq on the withdrawal of its forces from Kuwait, in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. At our initiative a meeting of a group of nonaligned foreign ministers was held in Belgrade. We have also been in touch with the members of the security council and other nations to evolve a consensus for cessation of hostilities and a peaceful resolution of the problem.

We extend full support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people for their inalienable right to a homeland of their own. There can be no lasting peace and stability in West Asia without a just resolution of the Palestinian question. This problem has been allowed to prolong far too long and must be addressed with full seriousness and urgency. We will continue to press for the urgent convening of an international conference, with the participation of all concerned, to find a peaceful and durable solution.

We support the efforts to find a peaceful solution to the tragic conflict in Cambodia and are ready to assist in this process. Such a settlement must ensure the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and non-aligned status of Cambodia.

In southern Africa, there are stirrings of profound change. Namibia, the last African colony, attained independence on March 21, 1990. In South Africa, several initiatives have been taken which could pave the way for negotiations to end apartheid. The visit of Dr Nelson Mandela, to India in October 1990 was an historic event with the entire nation welcoming him as a symbol of the struggle against apartheid.

We are strongly opposed to the efforts to institutionalise discrimination on the basis of race in Fiji, as elsewhere.

Hon'ble members, you will be called upon to consider a number of legislative measures and financial business during this session.

I now bid you to your arduous tasks. In this hour of crisis the people of India look to your sagacity and wisdom. We have in the past displayed a sense of purpose, tremendous resilience and a capacity to rally together in the face of challenges. I am sure that these qualities will help us build a strong united and prosperous India.

I wish you success in your endeavours. Jai Hind.

Statement Issued on Gulf Ground Offensive

91AS0689A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 25 Feb 91 p 1

[Excerpt] The Times of India News Service, New Delhi, February 24—India today expressed deep regrets and anguish over the outbreak of the ground offensive in the Gulf. In a statement, the government said it was in regular touch with the U.N. and some countries to see what was possible in the changed situation.

The government regretted that the peace efforts made by the Soviet Union, China, and some other members of the security council, including India, could not be of any use in averting the ground offensive.

The position taken by some members of the council made it impossible for it to discharge its functioning under the charter, and the council is now lying paralysed, the statement said.

The statement regretted that the chance afforded by the Gorbachev proposals and Iraq's commitment to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait was not seized and a ground war on a scale unprecedented since the Second World War has commenced.

The statement said India shuddered to think of the consequences of the ground war—the further destruction and devastation of Kuwait and Iraq and infliction of massive suffering on their peoples.

Referring to the suspension of the security council session on the Gulf, the statement expressed concern over some members of the council persisting with the view that the present security council had no role to play.

The statement said India was in touch with the members of the council to see what it could do in these circumstances.

India had urged the security council to remain in continuous emergency session in order to reconcile the USSR and the U.S. proposals, and produce an integrated plan as a basis for securing Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and the cessation of hostilities.

Unfortunately, some member-countries persisted with the view that for the present the security council had no role to play. As a result, the president of the council announced that there was a clear majority of the member-countries of the council wanting to meet and prepare a paper but because of the opposition, the council could not meet and therefore, stood adjourned sine die. [passage omitted]

Shekhar Interviewed on Budget, Other Matters

91AS0709A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 28 Feb 91 p 1

[Article by Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar]

[Text] New Delhi, 27 Feb—The budget has not been changed under pressure from the Congress, only its

timing has been changed. This was stated by the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, in a short exclusive interview.

He said he could not say how long his government would last as it was in the hands of another party. However, this did not prevent his government from taking all the decisions needed by the economy.

He did not regard the postponement of the budget as a policy change. In a democracy, he said, timing was important. Elections were due soon in Tamil Nadu, hence it was appropriate to put off the budget till after the elections. Such adjustments were quite natural in a democracy, he said.

The basic thrust of the budget would remain unchanged despite postponement, he said. The government had been living beyond its means in the past, and this could not continue indefinitely. Deficit financing had caused inflation, and this was a major source of dissatisfaction among the people.

Austerity might not be convenient to some sections of the population, but it could not be avoided. There was a scarcity of resources, and these had to be carefully husbanded to help the poor and promote employment.

Mr Chandra Shekhar noted that there was scope for cutting government expenditure. Not all subsidies benefitted the needy. For instance, fertiliser subsidies went in part to big companies, not farmers. A close look would be taken at all types of spending to see where savings could be made.

Apart from financial policies, other policies would also be attuned to promoting employment, he said. Small-scale industries and agriculture had great employment potential, which could not be said of some capital-intensive industries. Hence the policy thrust would have to be on the promotion of small-scale industries and agriculture.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said that foreign investment would be welcome in areas where the country needed it. If foreign companies were willing to function in India without asking for foreign exchange—that is, if they exported enough to take care of all their hard currency requirements—then he saw no need to limit their entry. However, India had to consider whether it could afford to let in companies which did not export, and wanted foreign exchange to remit dividends. Every poor country had to consider whether it could afford to service this sort of capital.

It would also be necessary to ensure that foreign companies did not drive out local companies, said Mr Chandra Shekhar. The capacity of Indian companies to withstand foreign competition differed from sector to sector.

Shekhar: No Decision on Baliapal Range*91AS0696A Madras THE HINDU in English
5 Mar 91 p 9*

[Text] New Delhi, 4 March: The Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, today said there was no decision to shift the National Test Range (NTR) from Baliapal in Orissa as an alternative site had not yet been found.

"It was a final decision (to locate NTR in Baliapal) taken by the previous Government. We have not been able to find an alternative site. So long as we don't find it the decision stays," Mr Chandra Shekhar told Mr Jaswant Singh in the Lok Sabha in reply to a starred question by Mr Madhu Dandavate.

He said the project was "very crucial and urgently needed" for the country and added "we cannot delay it." When Mr Dandavate persisted for an assurance that the decision would be reviewed in the interest of the displaced people, Mr Chandra Shekhar said "if the member suggests any miraculous suggestion then we will consider it. There is no miracle at this stage."

Mr Dandavate said about a lakh of Harijans and Adivasis would be disturbed by the test range, which he agreed was essential for the country. He suggested that an alternative site be located.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said there was resistance from the local population and the Government had considered 11 alternative sites. There were certain problems with every other alternative site, he added. Because of this the government was not in a position to rule out the present site. He said according to Government information only 41,000 people would be affected by the project but conceded that it was a large number.

Mr Jaswant Singh said the decision about Baliapal was taken after due process in which the State Government was also involved and wanted a final decision "this way or that way" immediately because of the security importance of the project.

Mr Chandra Shekhar told Mr Sontosh Mohan Deb that after taking into consideration the hardships of the people to be affected, the Government had decided on a Rs. [rupees] 17 crore plan to develop the area. Already Rs. 14 crores had been sanctioned to the Orissa Government. Fourteen industrial units were also being set up in the area for rehabilitation of the affected people, he added.

Shekhar Supported on President's Rule in Assam*91AS0531A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 18 Jan 91
p 6*

[Article by Rajesh Jha: "Chandra Shekhar Was Compelled To Implement Presidential Rule"]

[Text] The final decision to impose President's rule in Assam was made on 9 November after many ups and

downs. The V.P. Singh government had agreed to it on 3 November because both the Brooke Bond and Lipton tea companies had declared that they would leave the tea plantations because of the continued ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam) terrorist activities.

The Assam government earns 1.6 billion rupees annually from these tea plantations. These plantations also employ hundreds of thousands of people. Tea and petroleum industry produce 85 percent of Assam's income. Tea provides 48 percent of the income. The ULFA terrorists had kidnaped Mr. H.K.L. Das, director of Petroleum Industries in the past and had blackmailed the government into releasing three terrorists and also received millions of rupees as donation for their war treasury. The terrorists were planning to repeat this act on the tea industry now. When the managers of tea industries received the warning, they informed their companies and told them that they did not trust the state government. The Brooke Bond and Lipton tea companies immediately shared their concern with the Indian government. They also communicated their lack of trust in the Mahant government. As a result of this, the Central government removed all administrators of tea industry out of Assam using an airlift operation during the night. It was impossible to hide the incompetence of the state government after the administrators of a major partner in the state's economy had to run away in the middle of the night. Mufti Mohammed Sayyed, who was very upset when AASU (All Assam Students' Union) had insulted and embarrassed him on behalf of the AGP (Assam Gana Parishad), found solid ground to follow up on his threats.

The operation airlift took place during the night of 8 November and Chandra Shekhar took the oath for prime minister's office on 10 November. He was surprised after taking the oath how it was an absolute must to impose president's rule in Assam. A Janata Dal leader from Assam who is very close to Chandra Shekhar told us that Chandra Shekhar wanted to dismiss the Morcha government decision, however, the rationale for this decision was so strong that he could not change it. He could, however, postpone it. Soon after taking the oath he met with his top aides and talked to Praful Kumar Mahant on the phone. The message had a threatening tone (according to Mr. Mahant). He told Mahant, "We will announce elections later. Right now declare all the 17 districts terrorized by ULFA as emergency areas."

The Incompetence of the state government became a common knowledge when Mr. H.K.L. Das, director of Petroleum Research Institute was kidnaped, police officer Negi was murdered in broad day light, and the district police commissioner's wife was murdered. However, at that time the Morcha government did not have the required confidence because of the problems at the Center to take a strong action against this group. There was no clash of personal interests at that time. Everything had changed since then. There was a big clash between the Janata Dal and the AGP. The AGP encouraged its student wing (AASU) and humiliated Mufti

Mohammed Sayyed very badly. Ganesh Gosawami threatened to resign as a minister in protest of this treatment. He withdrew his resignation when Mahant and Phukan apologized, however, the conflict was not reduced. [The state government] was still a partner of the Morcha government and the latter did not want to goad it before thinking it thoroughly. However, why should have Chandra Shekhar done that? Had he not the fear of being accused of bias and being a puppet of the Congress (I), he might have declared President's rule on 11 November.

Mr. Chandra Shekhar used this strategy to give the AGP government some time to improve the situation and then to hold elections on time. The AGP leaders did not understand the central government warning. They became rigid and started to visit and pressure the election commissioner, Congress (I) president Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister Shekhar, and the president to announce holding new elections and also began to spew fire in newspapers.

The prime minister repeated his warning to the Assam government on 15 November while talking with the home minister and some high officials of the Assam government. It was officially decided in that meeting to send 50 companies of the National Guard to control ULFA activities. The central government wanted the Assam government to declare emergency in some districts so that it could send the National Guard there. The Assam government agreed to it on 15 November and the central government decided how to prioritize the move. When the AGP government did not follow through for one week, the home ministry got worried.

The prime minister was firm on changing the Morcha government decision and maintaining the democratic government in Assam. However, his faith was shaken when he was told by the home ministry that the AGP government had in the past wasted time, money, and resources by having the central forces assigned to peaceful areas instead of riot areas. Chandra Shekhar warned the state government that if it did not identify the emergency areas, it would be understood that the state government was opposed to having free and unbiased elections in Assam. Chandra Shekhar wanted to let the state government know that he wanted to solve the terrorism problem in the state with an open mind as the terrorists were controlling the police and the government in Assam. The central government was considering the Assam problem more serious than the Kashmir and Punjab problems. As a result, the central government took a very strict view of the situation.

In response to Chandra Shekhar's 28 November deadline, the Mahant cabinet declared that it would resign if election dates were not announced by 28 November. The central government learned through intelligence sources that the state cabinet was planning to resign if announcement to hold elections was not issued by 30 November.

The Chandra Shekhar government reacted to connivance with connivance. He called Praful Kumar Mahant to Delhi and sent armed forces to all the troubled areas. Devi Lal, Bhagat Charan Das, and Subodh Kant told the chief minister in their talks with him that the central government was in favor of holding elections in Assam on time. Meanwhile, four companies of the Central Reserve Force had arrived by a special airplane at the Borajhad airport during the night of 22 November. They had very serious meetings in Delhi and the situation in Dispur became very tense because of the heated discussions in Delhi. During the night of 26 November, 60 additional companies of guards had been deployed in Assam. According to some Janata Dal legislators, it was decided to appoint Tripura's first secretary Ishwari Prasad Gupta and P.P. Srivastva, additional secretary in the Ministry of Urban Development, as special advisors to the Assam governor. The governor made the preliminary preparations early in the morning on 26 November. He reappointed Haren Nath Das, who was fired by Mahant, to the position of first secretary. In a high level meeting that noon, final touches were given to the plan under which emergency was to be declared in Assam. The same night, Mahant talked to one of his trusted ministers and expressed his confusion and also said that this man (Chandra Shekhar) appeared to be bent upon establishing president's rule.

Ganesh Bora (a minister) in Dispur started to phone newspaper offices and asked them to print news items against president's rule. However, it was too late. The chief minister's statement was issued in Delhi declaring that "Chandra Shekhar's government was being run by the industrialists, Congress (I), and the owners of tea plantations and the government was being dismissed at their bidding and president's rule was being imposed in an undemocratic manner."

President's rule is a very bitter pill. Its good points are hidden under the bureaucratic and autonomous rule. The people get agitated and that is one reason why president's rule is opposed. The AGP and AASU jointly decided to hold a black out on the night of 29 November and a 12-hour strike on 30 November. When the black out failed, the AGP [Assam People's Council] and AASU [All-Assam Students' Union] members threw rocks at houses in Rehabari, Bamuni Miadan, Ganeshgudi, and other areas. The people helped make the strike nominally successful just because they were scared by this incident. It clearly indicated that the people in Assam are extremely angry at the AGP government and are willing to bear with president's rule, which could be poison or nectar, depending on the situation.

We cannot say which way the politics will go in the future. However, it is clear that the people are happier under president's rule as they were fed up with the corruption and bad administration of the Mahant government. However, it is not good to sleep under the guard of bayonets in a democracy.

The AGP and AASU leaders are now raising hue and cry against president's rule, but they themselves are questionable characters. They are being ignored because the AGP itself had invited president's rule. Had it recognized the central government's concern and had the Mahant government given more importance to good administration and national unity than to their election preferences, then all this would not have happened. Independent elections in the state would have taken place on time.

Shekhar Said To Gain Admiration of Sikhs

91AS0531B New Delhi JANSATTA in Hind i 12 Jan 91
p 2

[Article: "Sikhs Like Prime Minister Shekhar Now"]

[Text] New Delhi, 11 January—Prime Minister Shekhar and the Sikhs in the capital have started to like each other. He was presented a Saropa according to Sikh rituals yesterday, which is the first one presented to anyone in any Gurudawara [Sikh temple] in a long time. In spite of all the problems and demands, the Sikhs consider Chandra Shekhar their supporter.

Yesterday, the Saropa was presented to Prime Minister Shekhar by Jatthedar Omarkar Singh Thapar, national general secretary of the Akali party, on behalf of the Tirai Biradri and Samuh Sikh Sangat in Tilak Nagar. The meeting was heavily attended by the Sikhs. When Chandra Shekhar said that he had come to get strength from the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book), the crowd raised slogans, "He who takes the name is blessed, God is the truth."

One reason for the unprecedented attendance by the Sikhs in the meeting was the fact that the prime minister had canceled his attendance in the National Film Festival in order to come to the Sikh temple. He also had canceled a dinner at an embassy. According to Jatthedar Thapar, the prime minister had told his secretary to cancel all his appointments so he could speak at this meeting. Chandra Shekhar had said that he wanted to be present where Guruvani (Sikh scripture) was being read and efforts were being made to call for peace.

Jatthedar Thapar said in the meeting that the Sikhs did not want a Khalistan [separate Sikh country], and they were just upset because their demands were ignored. He appealed that the Hindus in Punjab and Sikhs in the rest of India be declared minorities.

Chandra Shekhar has been very successful in winning the Sikhs after he became the prime minister. There are two reasons for this success. First, he is the only non-Akali leader in the nation who had openly criticized Operation Blue Star in 1984. Second reason is that Sikh and Akali leaders receive priority in getting appointments with him. The prime minister's office has started to give special treatment to them. He has already met with representatives of over three dozen Sikh organizations.

The Sikh group that Chandra Shekhar addressed yesterday in Tilak Nagar is not only important because of the number of people there but also because of the enthusiasm shown by the crowd. The prime minister called Operation Blue Star an unfortunate incident and said that he had to suffer grave political consequences because of his opposition to this operation.

He appealed to the Sikhs not to consider themselves second class citizens and said that love of any group could not be won by bullets.

Leaders of Danga Pidit Rahat Simiti [council to help those suffering from riots], National Sikh Council, Central Guru Singh Sabha, and leaders of various Akali Dal factions such as Badal, Man, Langowal have met him dozens of times along with the representatives of their groups.

Balwant Singh Talwandi, Kuldeep Singh Mogal, Gurucharan Singh Sabbharwal, Ranvir Singh Reen, Tarwinder Marwah, Tinkle Bindra, Onkar Singh Thapar, Avatar Singh Hit, Harcharan Singh Delhi, Kartar Singh Narang, and Mahendar Singh Obroi have all been invited to the prime minister's office. Jatthedar Rachhpal Singh has called him a friend of Sikhs many times. Even though the fact remains that problems like payment to those who suffered in the 1984 riots have not been solved.

Since the day Chandra Shekhar announced that he would talk to Punjabi rioters or anyone who considers himself an Indian, the Sikhs have decided that he really wants to solve the Punjab issue.

Paper Reports on Visit of German President

Warm Welcome Noted

91AS0698A Madras THE HINDU in English
1 Mar 91 p 9

[Article by K.K. Katyal; words in boldface as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 28 February: The German President, Dr Richard Von Weizsaecker, arrived here today to a cordial, affectionate welcome, symbolising the warmth in India's relations with Bonn. The President, Mr R. Venkataraman, headed the group of dignitaries at a formal reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The four agreements signed later in the presence of the two Presidents reflected continued German interest in India. These related to soft loans for import from Germany of fertilizer and capital goods, extension of export promotion projects and technical and financial cooperation. Particularly important to Dr Weizsaecker, as he told me during an hour-long conversation in Bonn last week, was the manner in which the "political dialogue has recently developed" between the two countries—of which his visit was a part.

Also significant was the very fact of the visit. It was not easy for a head of State or a head of government to leave the country these days except on a Gulf-related mission. Dr Weizsaecker kept the date even as the Gulf crisis acquired new knots, prior to today's ceasefire declaration by the U.S. The political uncertainties here could have come in the way of the visit but Bonn decided to proceed with it. When the idea of the trip was first mooted towards the end of last year, India witnessed a change of guards. Soon after, when the details of the visit were being planned, New Delhi was abuzz with the speculation over the possibility of a fresh Lok Sabha poll in February-March.

A healing touch: A respected, venerable figure, Dr Weizsaecker, has provided a healing touch in the midst of domestic stresses and strains, in his capacity not only as the head of State but as one representing the nation's soul and morale, its sentiments and aspirations. He epitomises a spirit of conciliation, consensus and harmony, with the result that Dr Weizsaecker, despite his Christian Democratic past, had no difficulty in getting elected for the second five-year term—the maximum permissible—some three years ago. This will give a new, durable dimension to his assurances and commitments to India. He is a former Mayor of Berlin.

Going by his other remarks during last week's conversation, Dr Weizsaecker, is certain to reiterate his country's political commitment to continued "special" relationship with India, after the unification. This may not necessarily mean an immediate increase in Germany's aid to India but it does mean the strengthening of the foundations for bilateral ties and a helpful (from New Delhi's standpoint) role by Bonn in the post-1992 unified Europe. Dr Weizsaecker was conscious of the fears in India about the restrictive tendencies of some in the European Community but was categorical that Germany would throw its weight on the side of openness—"we live with open borders: we cannot live in a fortress," he said.

Aid to India: Next year's aid to India is unlikely to exceed the present level—because of the unusually heavy demands on Bonn for the reconstruction of the eastern part. Trade and investments have, of late, shown a downward trend—in the first case because of the fears of political instability in India as also the perceived uncertainties about the course of the liberalisation process. The discussions in the next two days will seek its reversal.

Dr Weizsaecker's visit coincides with the suspension of hostilities in the Gulf, and this gives an added urgency to the discussions between him and his hosts on the post-war security arrangements in the region. Both India and Germany have expressed identical views on issues, arising from the Gulf crisis, as was evidenced by the Foreign Secretary, Mr Muchkund Dubey's talks with senior officials in Bonn last week. Germany, like India would like a new security system to emerge from within rather than be imposed from outside.

Conflict management: The two countries, I was told by Foreign Ministry officials in Bonn, have a high degree of identity on the analysis of the crisis and aims of the future policy though a dialogue will be necessary on the instruments. Germany, it was pointed out, had a good record of conflict management and had succeeded in bringing about a balance of power without firing a shot, through confidence-building measures and was, thus qualified to give advice on mechanisms to settle regional problems.

Grant to India

91AS0698B Madras *THE HINDU* in English
1 Mar 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 28 February: An inter-Governmental agreement between India and Germany was signed here today for the extension of concessional credit of about Rs.[rupees]174 crores (DM 174 millions) for specified purposes.

The agreement was signed by the Union Finance Minister, Mr Yashwant Sinha, and the German Minister for Economic Cooperation, Mr Carl Dieter Spranger, and Mrs Ursula Seiler-Albring, Minister of State in the Federal Foreign Office of Germany.

A second agreement was also signed by the Commerce Minister, Dr Subramaniam Swamy and the two German Ministers, extending the Indo-German Export Promotion Project (IGEP) for a three year period covering 1990-93. This will entail a German grant of about Rs. 11.2 crores (DM 11.2 millions). Both the agreements were signed to coincide with the visit of the President of Germany, Mr Richard von Weizsaecker.

Under the first agreement, Germany will provide three loans totalling DM [Deutsche marks] 174 millions out of which DM 100 millions will be earmarked for the import of fertilizers from that country. Imports made during 14 December 1990 and 31 December 1991 will be eligible for financing under this loan, which has been made available from existing unutilised German credits.

Another DM 60 millions will be for meeting part of the local costs of the Dadri gas-based power project which will be incurred during 1991-92. Funds for this loan have also been made available from existing unutilised credits. Germany has already provided DM 424.9 million for this project as mixed credit, that is, 50 percent soft and the balance as export credit.

Joint Working Groups

91AS0698C Madras *THE HINDU* in English
5 Mar 91 p 9

[Article by K.K. Katyal; words in boldface as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 4 March: Apart from agreeing to set up a consultative mechanism to plan long-term cooperation, India and Germany have formed three groups to deal with immediate issues, one of which is concerned

with converting the unutilised aid from Bonn into allocations for quickly utilisable projects. The amount that has not been used totals about 2 billion DM [Deutsche marks] in the form of soft credit and the new arrangement will be of great help in the midst of current foreign exchange difficulties.

Housing project: Another joint working group is intended to promote cooperation in projects in third countries. To start with, it will take up an ambitious scheme for constructing 60,000 houses in the Soviet Union for the troops, due to return home from Eastern Europe. The cost of the scheme is estimated at 8 billion DM. A technical group will be formed to sort out problems arising from the interrupted links with the erstwhile GDR, with which India had rupee trade arrangements. India owes the GDR Rs. [rupees] 50 crores while a large number of contracts have been left in the middle, with Indian suppliers facing the prospect of making payments in hard currency, in the absence of remedial steps.

Nearly 100 countries are pressing Bonn to sort out difficulties caused by the interruption of dealings with the former East Germany and they will have to wait. India, however, has been able to jump the queue—this is the meaning of the decision to set up the technical group to address the “GDR problem.”

A Foreign Office spokesman, who gave the gist of the decisions taken in the discussions during the three-day stay here of the German President, Mr Richard Von Weizsaecker, before his departure for Madras, spoke with visible satisfaction of Bonn's desire to forge a significant long-term partnership with India. This process, according to him, will be facilitated by the fact that the bilateral ties are not strained by the burdens of history or other negative factors, as also by Germany's positive assessment of India's infrastructure, dynamism of its economy, its entrepreneurial skill, the size of its market.

The fact that he stuck to his schedule at the time of other pre-occupations, specially those related to the Gulf crisis, for a “visit to eternal India, not to a particular Government or a leader,” did not go unnoticed here.

The consultative mechanism of 10 eminent intellectuals from each side was seen as one country's lobby in the other. It is expected to be set up in a month or two. In the near future, the festival of India in Germany will emphasise the cultural dimensions of the bilateral relationship. The Prime Minister will go to Germany in September on the occasion of its inauguration.

Identical views: India and Germany, it appears, have a pronounced identity of views on some of the major, sensitive topical issues—the Gulf, developments in the USSR and the UN's role. Both India and Germany want the U.N. to play a role in the post-war situation, agree that it is not the time for retribution (Germany wants the defeated party to be treated in the framework of Marshal Plan and not of Versailles treaty). Bonn has not made a secret of its unhappiness over criticism by its friends of

its decision not to send troops to the Gulf, and repeatedly points to the contradiction between this position of theirs and the earlier insistence on constitutional safeguards against the re-emergence of militarism in Germany.

Meeting With Press

91AS0698D Madras *THE HINDU* in English
2 Mar 91 p 9

[Words in boldface as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 1 March: In keeping with the mutual desire for frequent and regular contacts, India and Germany are likely to set up a broad-based Consultative Group on Indo-German relations which could maintain a sharp and continuing focus on the possibilities, compulsions and needs of a long-term perspective of bilateral relations.

The proposal for such an institutional framework was mooted by the President, Mr R. Venkataraman, in the course of his speech at the banquet in honour of the visiting President of Germany, Dr Richard von Weizsaecker, this evening, and by all indications, favourably accepted by the German President.

Dr Weizsaecker, in the course of his meeting with the press earlier in the day, also endorsed the need for institutionalising Indo-German contacts since he felt that the once-a-year meetings at the time of the U.N. General Assembly did not do merit to the growing bilateral cooperation in all fields.

The Indian proposal for a Consultative Group, he said, was a good proposition and hoped that a favourable conclusion could be reached on this issue during his visit. It could be a group small in number but wide in experience with experts from the fields of politics, industry, trade, banking, academics and culture and could possibly meet once a year. This could be supplemented by frequent dialogues at the level of the Foreign Ministers to keep up the political contacts, he said.

Dr Weizsaecker repeatedly emphasised on the German desire to co-operate closely with India since he visualised a joint role for the two countries in the international arena and particularly in the U.N. where he said it was the responsibility of countries like India and Germany to introduce subjects of importance which had to be tackled urgently.

He listed the widespread hunger and poverty and the on-going North-south confrontation as issues which have to be tackled by the U.N. “The U.N. has to prove that it can cope with these new challenges and it is for India and Germany to introduce these subjects there,” he added.

Future of U.N.: Responding to a range of questions on the future of the U.N. in the wake of the Gulf war, the talk of a new world order by the many to play a more important role in the U.N., particularly in the Security Council, Dr Weizsaecker said that while the Gulf war

was the full responsibility of the Iraqi President, Mr Saddam Husayn, it was now the responsibility of the U.N. to see that lasting peace emerged in the region.

This would be a testing task for the U.N. to prove that it could play its role now and in the future, he said.

For Germany, he said it had contributed considerably to the process of East-West detente which led to the U.N. taking a unified stand on the Iraqi aggression in Kuwait and the endeavour would be to see that this cooperation was maintained.

Besides, restoration of damage in some of the countries not associated directly with the war had to be undertaken and Germany was keen to see that this was done.

Dr Weizsaecker reiterated the German view that a lasting solution to some of the problems in West Asia had to come from the region and these included issues like that of Israel and the Palestine, disarmament, the economic divide among the nations of the region, etc.

Declines comment: Declining to comment on the question of Germany wanting to become a permanent member of the Security Council, he however said that the two other members of the Council from Europe, that is France and the U.K., should realise that their role was to speak for Europe as a whole and not from their country's view-point only.

On bilateral economic matters, he referred to the apprehensions expressed in India about the protectionist barrier likely to come up with the unification of the European market and gave the assurance that Germany would act as a guarantee that the market will remain open. "We feel that large opportunities will be available to India if the market remains open and we are a guarantee that it will remain open," he said.

The German President had meetings with Mr Venkataraman, the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr L.K. Advani, and the Congress(I) President, Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

Speech at Technology Institute

91AS0698E Madras THE HINDU in English
5 Mar 91 p 5

[Words in boldface as published; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Madras, 4 March: The German President, Dr Richard Von Weizsaecker, today warmly commended the 'mutual trust and the spirit of friendship' manifesting through Indo-German cooperation.

Delivering an address at the special convocation in the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, where he was conferred an honorary doctorate, Dr Weizsaecker said that the history of the institute was a special chapter of Indo-German cooperation and to date, the IIT,

Madras, remained the 'largest and most important project of our cooperation in the educational sector world-wide.'

'I am deeply gratified at the large number of professors and other academic staff of the IIT who have worked at German universities and research institutions and who still maintain close contacts with their German partners and in many cases speak fluent German,' he said. The speed with which India succeeded in training a large group of outstanding scientists and engineers filled the Germans with admiration. 'You, the students of the IIT, Madras, will in future belong to that group. The opportunity to study and research here will shape and enrich your lives,' he said.

High expectations: The President reminded the students that studies and research were not an end in themselves. 'It should not be forgotten that the people in our two countries place high expectations in you and your German partners; you will be called upon to cope with difficult problems facing India and to safeguard its future.'

'We shall continue to be at your side as you shape your country's future. Of the countries in the southern hemisphere, India has traditionally been our most important partner for cooperation projects. We would like to keep up this tradition,' Dr Weizsaecker said.

The German President spelled out the priorities for cooperation—combating poverty, improving rural living conditions, and protecting the natural environment in liaison with Indian non-governmental organisations. Enhancing the competitiveness of Indian industry in advanced technology and improving its energy and transport systems were also on the agenda. Some of these projects were reflected in the areas of ongoing cooperation at the IIT, Madras, primarily in new technology sectors.

Cultural relations: Dr Weizsaecker also referred to cultural relations. While other countries first sent their traders to India, Germany sent its scholars. Indian traditions had inspired German philosophy and literature. The discovery of ancient India gave rise to a second renaissance in Western thinking and opened a new era. Conversely, German Sanskrit scholars had left a strong impression in India, he said. 'By recalling its great cultural tradition while under colonial rule, India strengthened its national consciousness which became the driving force of the emerging movement for independence.'

From next September India will stage a cultural festival in Germany for six months enabling the German public to become better acquainted with a wide range of Indian cultural life, he said. Dr Weizsaecker expressed his thanks to the IIT, Madras, for the award of the doctorate degree and felt he had become a member of 'your large technological family.'

Earlier, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the institute, Dr M.S. Swaminathan, declared the convocation open and Prof. N.V.C. Swamy, Director, conferred the degree. The citation referred to the wide ranging interests and political acumen of Dr Weizsaecker and his administrative abilities. The German President had played a key role in shaping intra-German policy for over 40 years and his elevation as the President of the FRG in 1984 was acclaimed as a national tribute to his combined virtues of statesmanship and scholarship, the citation said. It was read by Prof. V.M.K. Sastri, Dean, Academic Research.

The German President later visited the Siemens Computer Centre and the Ocean Engineering Centre in the campus. He also inaugurated a wave generator in the latter place. He also made a donation of DM [Deutsche marks] 10,000 (Rs. [rupees] 1.3 lakhs) to the institute for the purchase of books to the library as a token of his goodwill.

Leave for Bombay: Mr Weizsaecker and his wife, Mrs Marianne Von Weizsaecker, were given an affectionate send off at the Meenambakkam old airport when they left this evening by a special IAF [Indian Air Force] aircraft for Bombay after concluding their two-day visit to the city.

The Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Mrs Maneka Gandhi, accompanied the German President.

At the tarmac, the German visitors were seen off by the Tamil Nadu Governor, Mr Bhishma Narain Singh, the two Advisers, Mr V. Karthikeyan and Mr V. Ramachandran, the Chief Secretary, Mr T.V. Antony, and the Director General of Police, Mr B.P. Rangaswami.

Among others present on the occasion were: the German Consul in Madras, Mr Rechen Hofer, representatives of three defence services in the city, and senior government and police officials.

Papers Comment on Coming Elections

Editorial Opinion Reviewed

91AS0711A Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA in English 24 Feb 91 p 24

[Editorial by Suneet Vir Singh]

[Text] The goings on in New Delhi fill the press with disgust. The formation of the *putli sarkar* by Mr Chandra Shekhar was bad enough, but the on-going letter offensive launched by Mr Rajiv Gandhi against the Janata Dal (S) government is seen to be damaging our sense of national pride and self-esteem.

In a hard hitting editorial, the Prime Minister on Oxygen, AJIT (Jalandhar) observes: This crippled government cannot take even one step without the crutch of the Congress-I. What use is such a government when

there is a grave crisis facing the nation? Mr Rajiv Gandhi is more powerful today than ever before. He is the super Prime Minister. Mr Chandra Shekhar is his obedient servant.

Editorial opinion across the nation is near unanimous in accusing the Congress of wanting to enter South Block through the back door ANDHRA JYOTI, (Telugu). GUJARAT SAMACHAR describes the controversy over the refuelling of U.S. military aircraft as a mere ploy being used by the Congress to ditch the JD(S) government and come to power. KERALA KAUMUDI (Malayalam) gleefully reports that Mr Chandra Shekhar's government is running towards its grave. This infanticide is being committed by the Congress party which was unceremoniously rejected by the electorate in November 1989. According to KERALA KAUMUDI, the Congress's game plan is to woo some JD(S) MPs [Members of Parliament], the Independents and several JD MPs from Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. Mr Rajiv Gandhi's aim is to become the Prime Minister and then hold the general elections under his stewardship.

In the eyes of the press, the nation is the helpless victim of the devious games of the Congress and the opportunistic Chandra Shekhar. Several editorials voice concern for the impact of the prolonged political instability on the country's economy and its very survival as a democracy. Even the ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA (Bengali) which is usually soft on Mr Rajiv Gandhi, is alarmed at the prospect of the country's economy heading for certain disaster.

We have come to this sorry pass because both the Congress and the JD(S) do not want to risk displeasing the electorate with a stiff dose of new taxes. It is only SAKAL (Marathi) which praises Mr Rajiv Gandhi for using all his political power to see that there is no further price rise to increase the burden of the common man.

What is the solution to the present state of uncertainty and political instability? The President, Mr R. Venkataraman's proposal of a national government finds few takers in the media. RANCHI EXPRESS dismisses the same old *raga* of a national government as impractical. This is because our politicians have only one policy—*vite ke rajniti*. Take the case of Mr V.P. Singh who talked of evolving a national consensus on major issues. The same V.P. Singh precipitated a caste war simply in order to woo the votes of the backward classes.

NAI DUNIYA (Madhya Pradesh) came up with the most detailed analysis of why a national government will not work. Its long editorial on our doubtful future points out that such a government was formed in England only during the second World War, when Churchill and Atlee formed a national government. But in our country, we did not form such a government even at times of war. Secondly, here we have a large number of political parties. Are there any major issues on which the main political parties in the country are in total agreement? Who will be the Prime Minister of such a government?

There will be a messy battle over this very question. The only way out of the present frightening situation is a mid-term poll. In democracy it is the people who must have the final say in elections, even if they come soon on the heels of the last polls, are a must.

RAJASTHAN PATRIKA also favours early elections. The Congress is damaging itself by not wanting to go to the polls. The garland of the deeds of the Chandra Shekhar government will be thrown at Rajiv Gandhi's head. It is the Congress which, in the eye of the electorate, is responsible for the rising prices, increasing unemployment and lack of progress. Rajiv Gandhi is the director of the political puppet show in New Delhi.

Today the press views both the JD(S) and the Congress with contempt. Mr V.P. Singh evokes extreme emotions. The Hindi press hates him. Several largely circulated newspapers will never forgive him for his Mandal mania. But the minority press and the Dalit press is waiting with bated breath for the return of the Raja of Manda. Chandra Shekhar's government lives on oxygen. Whether the patient is dead or alive, we have no hope in Shekhar. So the preparations for the mid-term poll must begin. V.P. Singh must start brisk preparations by churning the stinking social cesspool that is India.

If the fourth estate had its way, the nation would go to the polls today.

Option for Gandhi

91AS0711B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
4 Mar 91 p 1

[Article by D.P. Kumar]

[Text] New Delhi, 3 Mar—Having come to the end of his quest for power, the Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has now apparently the hard option left for him—to go to the polls without remaining at the helm of affairs, and frankly speaking, being able to use, as the Prime Minister, the official machinery to advantage. In parenthesis, it must be said that Mr Chandra Shekhar has already placed some of Mr Gandhi's men in key positions.

To go by the political scenario as it is emerging, it now appears that mid-term elections are on the cards—and sooner in the middle of the year, rather than later towards the year-end.

The irony of it all, it now seems in retrospect, is that Mr Gandhi had been offered Prime Ministership on a platter by the President, Mr R. Venkataraman, when Mr V.P. Singh's Government fell last November. He did not take it then, holding nonchalantly that he did not have the mandate to rule, but that he would back the breakaway Janata Dal(S), so that Mr Chandra Shekhar could become the Prime Minister.

In just two months since then, Mr Gandhi has felt uneasy seeing that under the rather capable and skillful stewardship of Mr Chandra Shekhar, the ground was slowly

slipping off his feet, and if allowed to continue for much longer, Mr Chandra Shekhar might steal the show, leaving him high and dry. The longer Mr Chandra Shekhar remained at the helm of affairs, the more remote will be the prospect of the Congress(I) retrieving its chances, and indeed, the party itself could be in peril and in danger of remaining one piece.

Attempts began even in January this year for a realignment of forces that could bring the Congress(I) back to power. First of all, secret parleys were started with the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Devi Lal, and more directly with his son, Mr Om Prakash Chautala, to secure a sizeable number of Lok Sabha members of the Janata Dal (Socialist) to come over and join the Congress(I), whereby Mr Gandhi could go to the President and say he was now ready to assume Prime Ministership. It was, however, seen that Mr Devi Lal was in no position to secure around 50 MPs [Members of Parliament] that added to Mr Gandhi's 212 (along with those of his allied parties) would make the proposed regime viable.

In the next move, the Congress(I) party managers went for the Janata Dal of Mr V.P. Singh which had by now held its convention at Puri and it was found that the erstwhile Jan Morcha group, led by Mr Arun Nehru, had not attended it in protest. The reasons for this became clear somewhat later—Mr V.P. Singh had said that there would be a 60 percent reservation in the party hierarchy or its senior posts for the members of the backward castes and minorities, and that the Janata Dal of Mr V.P. Singh had slowly changed its character from one that was championing the cause of fighting against corruption in politics and for democracy, to that of a party depending solely on casteist and communal appeal. Mr Nehru and his lieutenants were also simultaneously being wooed by their former colleagues in the Congress(I) to desert Mr V.P. Singh's company. But here too the efforts of the Congress(I) party managers did not succeed for lack of numbers, for it was found that Mr Nehru and his lieutenants could not contribute enough number of MPs to the Congress(I) to enable it to form a Government.

In the third phase, the plan was to draw some 30 MPs from the Janata Dal(S) with the help of Mr Devi Lal, and some 40 from the Janata Dal making it a total of 70 so that Mr Gandhi could form a Government with a comfortable margin and run it for nearly four years.

But this was hoping against hope. Fond calculations made by Mr Devi Lal's political operators put the figure as high as 43 (borrowing from the strength of the UP Chief Minister, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav's followers in the Lok Sabha estimated at 16 and the Gujarat Chief Minister, Mr Chimanbhai Patel's at 10). But the fact remained that it was just impossible to pull out that many MPs.

Meanwhile, the strength of the Janata Dal(S) had been reduced to 52, after the Lok Sabha Speaker had disqualified eight of its MPs. Moreover, it was now clearly seen that if Mr Devi Lal was allowed into the Congress(I), the

party would certainly lose two of its stalwarts—Mr Bhajan Lal and Mr Bansilal. The latter was threatening to leave the Congress(I) and form a rival party in Haryana in the eventuality of Mr Devi Lal being admitted into it.

Drawing a blank, some of Mr Gandhi's political operators with their known proclivity towards the Communists, gave him the plan of joining hands with the Left Front with a solid strength of 54 Lok Sabha members, and advised him it would be better to rely with the more reliable Left group rather than the hotch-potch of former defectors.

Gandhi 'Lack of Timing'

91AS0711C Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
23 Feb 91 p 8

[Article by Kewal Varma]

[Text] The Chandra Shekhar government is simply sinking. It is being kept alive only clinically. The longer it is kept afloat by Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the greater will be the damage of Mr Gandhi's political credibility. And he has no cushioning to absorb the shocks of any further damage. From Mr Gandhi's point of view, the earlier the elections, the better. Unfortunately, a sense of timing is not Mr Gandhi's strong point. Take, for instance, the run-up to the last parliamentary elections. The wind had been against him since 1987. At the beginning of 1989, an election year, he had a chance to regain favour in the Tamil Nadu elections. But he opted for a calculated risk and spurned the offer made by Ms Jayalalitha to contest the elections jointly. The result: not only was the adverse fortunes at the national level reinforced but now, to correct the mistake of 1989, he has to pay a heavy price in terms of seats allotted to his party in the forthcoming Assembly elections. Then he had a chance of influencing the national political climate through the Karnataka Assembly elections which he was sure to sweep and he did. But he could not take advantage of his strength in Karnataka as the Assembly elections were held simultaneously with the parliamentary elections. Then he worked hard to make the Panchayat Bill the platform for the elections. There was a chance of this happening had he announced the dissolution of the Lok Sabha the day the Bill collapsed in the Rajya Sabha.

Will he show the same lack of sense of timing again? However, even in the worst scenario, the elections cannot now be put off beyond October or November. Thus, it is natural that speculations have begun as to their possible outcome and the likely issue which will determine it. The key question is: Will the Indian electorate once again decide to give itself an unstable government? Or will it realise the mistake of two years ago and vote in a stable government? It is fashionable to say that the era of single party government is over and that India has now entered a historic phase of coalition governments. Even President R. Venkataraman in his Republic Day message to the nation, subscribed to this

theory. However, India has a not too happy experience of coalition governments. A coalition government has not worked in this country except when one party has total hegemony and is in a position to act as the Big Brother, as in the case of the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] in West Bengal. At the Centre the two occasions when the government collapsed on the floor of the House, i.e. in 1979 and 1990, were when coalitions had won the election. Also, a coalition is by its very nature a weak government, a government of the lowest common denominator. A coalition is good enough to perform a particular historic national task, say, in war-time or as in India in 1977 when it dismantled authoritarianism. But a coalition has rarely undertaken a sustained, positive, historic role. India is currently in an extraordinary situation, both politically and economically. Even the external scenario has taken a serious turn for India, following the Gulf war. It would have been ideal if there had been a national government to face up to this situation. But a national government is now a Utopian dream. The second-best answer to the situation is a single-party stable government.

What are the chances of the electorate voting in a stable government? This will depend on the issues which will be articulated in the election campaign. It is now certain that this time it will be an effective three-cornered contest and, unlike as in 1989, the central issue of the election will not be Congress versus the rest. The three fronts will be those of the Congress(I), the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the National Front-Left combine. It is, however, obvious that both the BJP and the National Front-Left combine will be making a determined assault on the Gandhian-Nehruvian consensus which has helped the Congress(I) to win a clear majority in seven out of nine general elections since Independence. In 1977, the Congress(I) lost as it itself sharply deviated from a key component of the Gandhian-Nehruvian consensus—civil liberty. It lost the 1989 election primarily because of the incompetence of its leadership. The main components of the Gandhian-Nehruvian consensus are national unity, social and economic modernisation, equity, secularism and a pronounced anti-imperialist posture in external affairs. Both the BJP and the National Front-Left alliance are attacking one or more components of the Gandhian-Nehruvian model.

Take the National Front-Left alliance. Its main thrust is to undermine social harmony which weakens national unity. This is the essence of the manner in which Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh implemented the Mandal Commission Report and is carrying forward its logic. This is manifest in his imposition of the formula of 60 percent reservation of party posts for the backwards on the Janata Dal. Its other manifestation is the crude manner in which he is playing the Muslim card and his exhortation to the Muslim power-brokers owing allegiance to him not to settle the Babri Masjid dispute so that he can get Muslim votes enblock. In the Gandhian-Nehruvian model, sectional interests are subordinated to

national interest and a policy of adjustment of sectional interests pursued in order to promote equity. But the BJP violates this principle by adopting postures which instead of harmonising are antagonising Hindu-Muslim relations; Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh does the same in regard to castes and in adopting postures which antagonise caste equations. It is also not accidental that when the nation is facing a serious crisis threatening its very survival, this does not become Mr Singh's number one concern. His primary concern is to promote sectarian interests through sharpening sectarian (caste instead of class) conflicts. He is doing what sectarian leaders did in the period of British rule. They were concerned exclusively with sectarian interests and ignored the task of winning independence.

The BJP's assault on the Gandhian-Nehruvian model is aimed at destroying most of the latter's components—secularism, social modernisation and its foreign policy posture. In recent days, the BJP intellectuals have been trying hard to isolate Jawaharlal Nehru from the mainstream of the national movement on the issue of secularism. Gandhi brought the secular consensus to the level of *Sarva Dharma Samabhava* that is, equal respect of all religions. Jawaharlal Nehru tried to carry that consensus a step farther to the level of *Dharmanirpeksha*, or neutrality leading to unconcern with religion. In his lifetime, Nehru was not able to consolidate the higher stage of secular consensus. He was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri who did not share, either intellectually or emotionally, his predecessor's social perceptions. However, Indira Gandhi picked up from where her father had left off. But she soon abandoned the Nehruvian perseverance to build a higher stage of secular consensus and slid back to the *Sarva Dharma Samabhava* consensus. Mr Rajiv Gandhi slid back further and it is perhaps this slide which emboldened the BJP to mount an attack on the very preliminary secular consensus, namely, *Sarva Dharma Samabhava*, by asserting that in this country Hindu religion shall have primacy. The party wants to assert this primacy in a demonstrative manner by building a mandir where a mosque stands. Implicit in the BJP's attack on secularism is an attack on social modernisation. It is not accidental that Rajmata Scindia, who is a link between the BJP and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP], is an ardent supporter of the practice of sati. Also, the Hindu Code Bill was opposed tooth and nail by the then BJP-minded leaders.

It is significant that the BJP has broadened its assault on the Gandhi-Nehru model by attacking the latter's foreign policy posture. (Gandhi forcefully supported the cause of the Palestinians.) It is the only party which supported the refuelling of U.S. war planes. The BJP has a worldview which is in complete contrast to the Gandhi-Nehru one. Its worldview is well worked out. That is the reason it is now posing a more serious challenge than the National Front-Left alliance to the Congress which, despite its many shortcomings, is synonymous with the Gandhi-Nehru model. Unlike as in 1977, there has been no serious departure from that model on the part of the

Congress. But there is one feature common with the 1989 situation, namely, Congress' not-so-competent leadership. On the other side, both Mr L.K. Advani and Mr Singh have shown that they are brilliant leaders. But the question is, to what use are they putting their brilliance? To destroy the Gandhi-Nehru consensus which provided sustenance to this nation for the last 70 years—from 1920 onwards when Gandhi assumed effective leadership of the Congress.

The question is: Has the Gandhi-Nehru model outlived its utility and is there a historically felt need to evolve an alternative model? The earlier two mild attempts to build an alternative model ended in ignominious failure. "But a third determined assault is again being mounted, more concerted than the previous ones. From an objective point of view, the alternatives presented are historically regressive. There is a nationally felt need for a stronger substitute for the Congress which—as stated earlier—despite the faults which have appeared over time, continues to be synonymous with the Gandhi-Nehru framework. But conscious attempts are being made to develop an alternative to the Congress. That is perhaps the key reason that such attempts succeed only temporarily and collapse sooner than later. There is no doubt that, as any other model, the Gandhi-Nehru one also needs constant renovation and adjustment in its objectives and in their reinterpretations to meet the needs of the changing times. Equally important is that it should be promoted and safeguarded by a competent leadership. But, perhaps, the present Congress leadership is not very competent. Could it be possible that this shortcoming may be offset to a great extent, if not fully, by an effective triangular contest this time as also the recent unhappy experience with anti-Congressism, the second in a decade? In fact, now, potentially the Congress(I) should win, say, about 400 seats. However, since its leadership is not in skillful hands, it will not be able to exploit this to the utmost, but it may scrape through.

Congress I Said Floundering

91AS0461A New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi
8 Jan 91 p 6

[Article by Jawaharlal Kaul: "Congress [I] is Trapped Into Forgetting Its Mistakes"]

[Text] When Vasant Sathe said that the policies of Congress [I] are also responsible for the present condition of the country, he was not saying something which some other Congress [I] leader had not said before. After taking a cursory look at the history of Congress [I] over the last two decades, one would find that many important leaders have talked similarly before. The only difference is that for those leaders it was difficult to remain in the Congress [I] for too long after making such statements. Those who understood the consequences, for example Jagjivan Ram and Vishwanath Pratap Singh, separated themselves from the Congress [I]. If they did not have the guts or did not realize the consequences, then like Kamalapati Tripathi kept moaning and were

made a laughing stock. But for Vasant Sathe there does not seem to be any danger at present from Rajiv Gandhi only because the Congress [I] leadership today does not know who to keep, who to get rid of, and who to support.

One commonly hears the saying "standing at the end of a road which bifurcates." But Congress party today is not even standing at a cross-road. It is in the open field where there is no road and it does not know what and how much danger lies ahead in any path it takes. Let us consider the example of supporting Chandra Shekhar's group in forming the government. Because of Ram Janambhumi agitation, Vishwanath Pratap Singh's position was ready to be undermined. Rajiv Gandhi felt that there could not be a better opportunity to bring about the demise of his strongest political enemy and that he should help bring about the downfall of Vishwanath Pratap Singh's government. This was not wrong thinking because, like the Janata Party Government, if the Janata Dal Government would fall in the midterm, then Congress [I] would once again get an opportunity to try the Indira Gandhi formula. The public will be told that no lame duck or coalition government can function and there is no alternative to Congress [I] for having a stable government. The formula was simple and workable but one serious difficulty emerged.

On Ram-Janambhumi issue, the public was so furious that Congress [I] suspected that if elections were held immediately, the party might end up in a worse situation than what it was in currently. The straight way to success did not seem that straight. Instead of taking the risk at elections, it was decided to take a circuitous route. By encouraging great aspirations of Chandra Shekhar, a split in Janata Dal was orchestrated and a government of 62 parliament members was formed. The Congress [I] leaders assured the president completely and in writing that they will support the socialist Janata Dal Government unconditionally. They may have had it in their minds that in six to eight months Ram Janambhumi agitation will come to a standstill, and Vishwanath Pratap Singh's Mandal commission slogans will also stop reverberating, and then, by using some excuse and applying the "Sanjay-Formula", Chandra Shekhar's government could be brought down and general elections held.

But even before two months had passed, Congress [I] leaders started to realize that the circuitous path they had opted for was a blind alley. Supporting Chandra Shekhar implied that they would have to support Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh. The leaders of Uttar Pradesh Congress [I] knew that this could be self-destructive for Congress [I]. The chairwoman of the state Congress [I] unit, Rajender Kumari Bajpayee, raised quite an objection and cursed Mulayam Singh Yadav and demanded his resignation. Narayan Dutt Tiwari also requested the central leadership not to do this [support Yadav] but nobody listened to him. Rajiv Gandhi knew that if Congress [I] withdraws support for Mulayam Singh Yadav's government, Chandra Shekhar's government would not last too long. In spite of

Rajiv's obligation, Chandra Shekhar could not take refuge from politics. His government's life blood is Mulayam Singh Yadav and therefore Congress [I] could not think of any way out except to have their fate mortgaged in the hands of the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, and this brought about a lasting change in the state of mind of major communities living in Uttar Pradesh and Western India. And because of Muslim leaders, V.P. Singh and leftist parties, there is no hope for the Ram Janambhumi issue being resolved in the near future. Because of Mandal commission, V.P. Singh will continue, as before, to have an uncharacteristic stronghold in many parts of India. For Congress [I] there is no choice left but to distance itself from the Chandra Shekhar government. But it is not possible to distance itself right away.

There are a lot of constraints which force a slow distancing. Most of Congress [I] members are beginning to believe that what they had expected to achieve by postponing elections is not going to be fulfilled. It is also clear that the present government would not be able to solve a complex problem like Punjab. Communal riots and the tension which is widespread in the country has paralyzed the administration. In addition, the economy of the country is in such a bad condition that it is not possible for any government to improve the situation quickly. The government will neither be able to stop inflation nor will it have some miraculous results on other fronts to bring about a wave of optimism in the public. The above factors are certainly going to influence the voters. If the Congress [I] appears to be in close rapport with the Chandra Shekhar government, then along with the Chandra Shekhar government, people will start considering Rajiv Gandhi and his party responsible for the present situation.

Therefore, the first step was taken by putting pressure on Chandra Shekhar to ask Mulayam Singh Yadav to resign and accept moral responsibility for the riots. This demand was made public and the example of the resignation of chief minister of Andhra Pradesh was used to support it. Probably the Congress [I] leaders knew that Chandra Shekhar could not force Mulayam Singh Yadav out of office. Therefore, the Congress Party only wants to cash in on the anti-Yadav campaign and show that they do not support him. The second step taken was that Rajiv Gandhi announced that Congress [I] has nothing to do with the policies of the government, and that Congress [I] would oppose wrong policies inside and outside of the parliament and it will play the role of an opposition party although in Lok Sabha and Rajyasabha, Congress [I] leaders are not considered leaders of the opposition. The loss of the opposition leader's rank would not have been less painful for Rajiv Gandhi. But in spite of his announcements, he was tied to his first mistake that he would not bring down Chandra Shekhar's government. It is possible that during the next budget session, Congress [I] might come out as a critic of the government policies.

But Rajiv Gandhi at present is not able to decide whether to bring down Chandra Shekhar's government shortly or not. In addition to the electorate fear, there is one more fear. The fear of plots against him within the Congress [I] Party. The statement made by Vasant Sathe could not be considered part of the plot because Vasant Sathe is known to say the truth openly. But one cannot ignore Sharad Pawar, the most powerful member of the Congress [I]. Sharad Pawar and Chandra Shekhar's friendship goes a long way back. On the one hand, Mr. Pawar has made the prime minister Chandra Shekhar his supporter and on the other hand, the behavior of Shiv Sena has also cooled down a bit. Mr. Bal Thakare is feeling that due to the popularity of Mr. Advani, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] may get ahead of his party and therefore he wants to keep his other options open. This is a very serious issue for Rajiv Gandhi not because Sharad Pawar can challenge Rajiv Gandhi at present for the leadership of the Congress [I] Party, but because if Rajiv Gandhi succeeds in breaking Janata Dal, then Chandra Shekhar may try to break the Congress [I]. It is doubtful that Chandra Shekar can succeed in this, but the danger is there. That is why the present lack of direction in Congress [I] is in fact due to one reason, Rajiv Gandhi's personal apprehensions.

Congress-I Party Poll Scheduled for May

91AS0695A Madras THE HINDU in English
4 Mar 91 p 11

[Text] New Delhi, 3 March: The organisation elections of the Congress(I) being held after 19 years would be completed by May, the AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-I] general secretary, Dr Balram Jakhar told newsmen here on Saturday, Dr Jakhar said the work relating to organisation elections was going on according to schedule. The enrolment drive for the party launched after the last July AICC(I) session ended in January.

The election process would start with the election of office-bearers of primary units and delegates to block Congress(I) committee and end by May with the election of AICC(I) members, by May with the election of AICC(I) members. This would be followed by election of a new Congress(I) president in June.

Mr Jakhar said the AICC(I) next session would be held in June. The CWC [Congress Working Committee] had taken a decision to hold the session in Uttar Pradesh.

As part of the elections process identity cards would be issued to presidents of primary units and block level delegates from the end of this month. This would be followed by identity cards to district and pradesh Congress(I) committee members and AICC(I) members.

CPI-M Issues Statement on Shekhar

91AS0699A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
26 Feb 91 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, 25 February: The CPI(M) Politburo today demanded the immediate resignation of the Chandra Shekhar government and holding of elections in the country.

In a statement issued here today after the end of the two-day Politburo meeting, the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] said, "The continuance of the Chandra Shekhar government with the opportunist support of the Congress(I) will spell danger for the country everyday that it lasts." It said, "The only way out of the impasses is to get a fresh people's mandate by holding elections."

The CPI(M) has, however, kept its options open on the caretaker government in the event of Mr Chandra Shekhar resigning. Mr Harkishen Singh Surjeet told newsmen while briefing newsmen on the outcome of the politburo meeting that it was for the President to choose the caretaker government. Asked whom the CPI(M) would prefer to head such a government, Mr Surjeet said, "We can't say anything on that. It is for the President to decide on who should head such a government in the event the Chandra Shekhar government resigns."

Asked whether the party should have given more time to the present government at the Centre as it had only been in power for three months, Mr Surjeet said this period was enough to assess the performance of the Chandra Shekhar government. "It has proved itself on the refueling issue, on Punjab and on the application of Article 356 of the Constitution while toppling the duly elected Tamil Nadu government," he said.

Coming down heavily on the Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the CPI(M) leader described him as the "backseat driver of the Chandra Shekhar government." He also ruled out the possibility of the Left parties support in the event of the Congress(I) forming the government at the Centre, saying, "if anybody is under such an illusion let him harbour it."

On the Congress(I)'s "opportunist" support to the Chandra Shekhar government, Mr Surjeet said it first supported the Chandra Shekhar government which was formed by defectors from the previous Janata Dal government and then tried to form the government itself by attempting to stage a further defection in the Janata Dal(S). But having failed in its attempt, it was now talking about holding elections.

The CPI(M) Politburo strongly criticised the President's address to Parliament and said it was remarkable for "its lack of direction and new policy initiatives. It confirms the bankruptcy of the unprincipled arrangement at the Centre." The CPI(M) said "The address justifies the

dismissal of the Tamil Nadu government and the bungling in Punjab. It does not highlight the serious communal situation and steps necessary to combat the communal menace. It has no direction to meet the serious economic situation facing the country. It glorifies the steady improvement in relations with the U.S. at a time when the government is surrendering to its pressure."

The Politburo condemned the removal of the Bihar Governor for his "refusal to follow the dictates of the ruling group at the Centre."

Report on Advani's 24 Feb Press Conference

91AS0707A Calcutta *THE TELEGRAPH* in English
25 Feb 91 p 4

[Article by Barun Ghosh]

[Text] Malda, 24 Feb—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr L.K. Advani, today said the Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, wanted to dislodge the Chandra Shekhar government before the Budget session of Parliament, but failed to muster up the requisite number of MPs [Members of Parliament].

Talking to newsmen at the Malda circuit house, Mr Advani said Mr Gandhi had plans of heading a caretaker government to conduct the elections to the Lok Sabha. He would withdraw support to the Janata Dal(S) government after the current session of Parliament ended. In all probability this would be the last session of the present Lok Sabha.

Mr Advani said Mr Gandhi too would not be able to provide a stable government because of the present political uncertainties. Lok Sabha elections would be held this year itself, he felt.

On Mr Gandhi's recent advice to Mr Chandra Shekhar to keep his party "intact" Mr Advani said, "This is hypocritical since Mr Gandhi is himself trying to break the Janata Dal(S)."

Budget Dilemma

Mr Advani said for the first time since Independence such an "unstable" situation had arisen on the eve of placing the Union Budget and no one knew what the parliamentary business would be in the House.

Despite working round-the-clock for the past three months, the Union finance ministry had failed to prepare a full-fledged Budget and would instead place a vote-on-account. This amply showed that the Chandra Shekhar ministry has got a very brief lease of life, he added.

Realignment for Polls

Asked about the possible political realignment, he said the BJP would not join any alliance and would contest the election alone. "Our party has decided to field

candidates for 450-500 seats in the next election," he said. He ruled out the possibility of the Congress(I) forging an alliance with the Leftists. The other non-BJP parties might forge an alliance to prevent the BJP from coming to power, he added.

Commenting on the performance of the Chandra Shekhar government, Mr Advani said he was functioning better than his predecessor, Mr V.P. Singh. However, "nothing can be expected from this government," he said, adding "This is not a minority government. This is a limping government."

Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid

According to Mr Advani, the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue would help the BJP in the next parliamentary election. "It will cease to favour us only if the temple is allowed to be built there," he said. The BJP leader objected to the West Bengal Governor, Prof Nurul Hasan's remark that the communal tension in Jhalda and Purulia was fomented by his rathayatra. "The state government had at one point of time commented that the tension had nothing to do with the rathayatra," he said, adding, "It is unethical on the part of a state government to make a Governor say something which is not true."

Tamil Nadu

Mr Advani said the BJP did not support the imposition of President's rule in Tamil Nadu. "What we had done was to condemn the activities of the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] government which had links with the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] extremists."

Commentator Reviews Shekhar's First 100 Days

91AS0714A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
20 Feb 91 p 8

[Commentary by Kuldip Nayar]

[Text] They could have been worse. The first 100 days of Mr Chandra Shekhar as Prime Minister have little other merit. No Indian Prime Minister since Independence has conceded so much to achieve so little. But then this is the price he had to pay to fulfil his ambition.

There is hardly any worthwhile thing to his credit so far, except perhaps his Socialist Janata Dal's convention at his home town, Ballia, where the money spent could have set up 12 modern schools, six health centres and two well-equipped hospitals. He has tried to be everything to everybody in life as if he was the answer to India's ills.

Mr Chandra Shekhar repudiated his claim to follow value-based politics when he bolted from Janata Dal on whose ticket he had won. He did worse: he formed a Government with the support of the Congress(I), which the people had rejected at the polls.

Once he had defied the autocratic rule of Mrs Indira Gandhi and had even gone to jail. Now he holds office at the pleasure of her son, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. Here is a person who journeyed not long ago on foot from Kanyakumari to Rajghat to focus attention on the common man's plight in India. Today he takes pride in flaunting his connexion with rich industrialists and men with dubious reputations. Every known racketeer is back in business.

As Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar has found no contradiction in supping publicly with Mr Adnan Khashoggi, who faces charges of corruption and cheating all over the world. Nor has he seen anything wrong in visiting Mr Surajdeo Singh, a mafia king in the Dhanbad coal belt, every three weeks. Some well-meaning people have pointed out to him that he cannot ride roughshod over the norms and ethics of public life. He has silenced them with the remark: "A friend is a friend."

Soon after he assumed power, Mr Chandra Shekhar reportedly told the newly appointed CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] Director that he would not interfere with his work. But within two days, there was a telephone call from the P.M.'s Office in favour of Mr Chandra Swami, "a friend," who avoided warrants of arrest during Mr V.P. Singh's rule. An unobliging officer dealing with the St Kitts case, which implicated Mr Chandra Swami for forging the signature of Mr V.P. Singh's son, has been transferred.

Deal On Bofors?

Many suspected a deal when Mr Chandra Shekhar said, within hours of being sworn in, that the Bofors gun scandal required the attention of an ordinary policeman, not the Prime Minister's. But one of his first fiats was to let legal officers probing the RS [rupees] 64-crore commission go. Mr Bhure Lal, who had kept an eagle's eye on the case, was relieved later from the Prime Minister's secretariat.

The parties involved have wanted time to manage things. Mr Chandra Shekhar's government has obliged them. Its additional Solicitor-General, Mr K.T.S. Tulsi, asked the prosecuting officer in the court itself not to oppose the petition for rejecting the First Information Report [FIR] on the Bofors case; the new Government had changed the "brief." Mr Tulsi even refused to support or oppose the FIR. This helped the over-zealous judge to pronounce that there was no prima facie case.

The Supreme Court tried to retrieve the damage through a stay order. This was, however, a god-sent opportunity for a Geneva canton to stall the proceedings on the application to make the Switzerland banks disclose the names of the recipients of the commission. (Incidentally, New Delhi is spending daily Rs 10 lakhs in hard currency as fee to keep the relevant accounts frozen. Nearly Rs 15 crores has been spent in the last five months.)

The initial wholesale transfer of secretaries at the Centre was whimsical. Mr Chandra Shekhar wanted to give the

impression of a change in the administration. In the process, new Ministers had new secretaries, both coming in each other's way to the detriment of smooth functioning. Even otherwise, the bureaucracy has been reluctant to take decisions, expecting the Government to fall any time.

Contrary to the general belief, the transfers were not at Mr Rajiv Gandhi's behest. His interest was only in two appointments and he saw to it that Mr Venkatramani was posted as the Reserve Bank Governor and Mr T.N. Seshan as the Chief Election Commissioner. Both can serve the purpose whenever the occasion arises. Mr G. Ramaswamy has been brought back as Attorney-General. He has been a lawyer of Mr Ajitabh Bachchan as well as Mr Dhirubhai Ambani. There is no conflict of interests between Mr Rajiv Gandhi and Mr Chandra Shekhar on this appointment.

"I am my own master," Mr Chandra Shekhar has said repeatedly. The dismissal of the Assam Government, which was at the instance of the Congress(I), did not raise many eyebrows. The people gave Mr Chandra Shekhar the benefit of the doubt because the State Government had a bad image. But the removal of the Tamil Nadu Government has confirmed who calls the shots.

Only On Paper

The austerity measures announced by the Chandra Shekhar Government are primarily on paper. The Government expenditure remains intact, the official entertainment undiminished and the tax structure unration-alized. There is hardly a Minister who does not use a special plane to travel inside and outside India.

The Prime Minister is the biggest offender. He is on one jaunt or the other practically every day. New helipads have been built at Devesthali to fly him in and out of Ballia. I counted last week in Delhi 11 cars in his cavalcade from house to office. The five-star farm, near Gurgaon, to which he retreats, is a venue of lavish parties to muster political support.

The Gulf war has not introduced any discipline in the spending of foreign exchange. The monthly gap between imports and exports had been brought to a manageable level, roughly Rs 250 crores, by the previous Government. The imports now total Rs 3,500 crores as against the exports of Rs 2,000 crores a month. The IMF loan, drawn so far, will not last beyond April. The dangerous fall-out is Mr Chandra Shekhar's increasing dependence on America.

In the political field, Mr Chandra Shekhar has been flitting from one subject to another. Today it is Punjab, Kashmir or Assam and tomorrow the Hindu-Muslim hiatus. So far he has proposed no solution. The militants in the three States appear to have realized that he has nothing to offer.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] or, for that matter, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP] would have refuelled the agitation over the Ram Janambhoomi-Babari Masjid issue. But it apparently wants to save the fury, which it exhibited on 30 October, for the time when the election fever begins so as to attract the Hindu vote. Mr V.P. Singh has, however, wondered why the BJP could not have conducted the same type of satyagraha during his time as it is doing now. Strange as it may sound, Mr Chandra Shekhar has not attacked the BJP by name since becoming Prime Minister.

As if he is already at the end of his tether, Mr Chandra Shekhar has said that any political arrangement or understanding was desirable to retrieve the difficult national situation. Surprising that he should realize the gravity now when his credibility has gone down. Neither the Janata Dal, nor the Communists have paid any attention to his statement. In their eyes he destroyed their combination. The BJP, too, remains unimpressed. Even the Congress(I) would not like him to last.

Gandhi Meets Press on Return From Moscow

91AS0697A New Delhi PATRIOT in English
1 Mar 91 p 6

[Excerpt] Stressing the need for restructuring the United Nations congress president Rajiv Gandhi said in New Delhi on Thursday in the Gulf nations felt that India had not played its due role in the crisis.

Talking about developments at home Mr Gandhi criticised the Union Government for its handling of the terrorists problem, and said he was concerned about the incidents of kidnappings and killings in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam. "I hope the Government will act firmly," he said. Mr Gandhi who released two doves as a mark of peace on emerging from the Indira Gandhi International Airport lounge was accorded a warm welcome by thousands of Congress workers and supporters.

Mr Gandhi who returned after six-day tour of Soviet Union and Gulf after meeting a host of leaders, said the recent events had shown that the United Nations had not been "unbiased and fair."

There could be restructuring of the Security Council, and even the General Assembly by giving more powers, Mr Gandhi said, adding that even the Non-Aligned Movement could be made to play an important role.

With Iraq leaving Kuwait "it is time to stop fighting and start peace" he said congratulating the people of Kuwait on liberation of their home land.

Mr Gandhi who met the USSR President Gorbachev, Iranian President Rafsanjani and others during his six-day peace mission said there was a distinct feeling in Iran and other gulf nations that there should be development of an "Asian personality" like Jawaharlal Nehru.

The countries visited wanted security arrangements to be linked with economic cooperation in terms of an

Asian personality without any hegemony, Mr Gandhi said there was a "deep desire to cooperate" with India in the post-war scenario. In Dubayy and Sharjah, Mr Gandhi said, he noticed a feeling that India was not paying enough attention to them and were feeling ignored in terms of high level visits.

The Congress president who was accompanied by a high-level team including former External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh, former Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandari asserted that New Delhi and Teheran had a key role to play in the development of common perceptions in the new world order and security arrangements as Iran was now a frontline state and had a key role to play in the area.

He sounded critical of the Janata Dal Government when he said it had virtually no interest in the developing gulf situation and allowed it to drift.

When asked about Chandra Shekhar Government, Mr Gandhi said it did not have time to come to grips with the situation.

The Congress chief explained that the United Nations resolution on Gulf conflict were passed during August-November and in most of these India played no role. "Had it not been for the ineffectiveness of the Janata Dal Government, India and the NAM could have done more" Mr Gandhi opined.

Answering questions on granting of an air corridor to the U.S. by India, Mr Gandhi said if he remembered it was for just a two week period. When asked if the decisions on granting air corridor and refuelling facilities had affected ties between India and Gulf states he said it was difficult to say.

In reply to queries about kidnapping NC leader's daughter and killings of Congress leaders in Assam, Mr Gandhi Criticised Central Government for its handling of terrorist problem in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and Assam.

Expressing concern, he said, "I hope the Government will act firmly." He further said he had a feeling that the Government really was not interested in facing terrorism, and this had given them (terrorists) [text missing].

Missile Technology 'State of the Art'

91AS0692A Madras THE HINDU in English
23 Feb 91 p 3

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Madras, Feb. 22—Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Director, Defence Research and Development Laboratory, Hyderabad, today said that India had attained the

"state-of-the-art" technology in its guided missile programmes. This was despite the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), evolved by seven advanced countries, which decided that they would not sell any technology, devices or capital to India.

Dr. Kalam, who was delivering the "C. Rajam Memorial Endowment Lecture" on the occasion of the silver jubilee celebrations of the Madras Institute of Technology Alumni Association here, said, "We have built our own spacecraft, launch vehicles and missiles. I can authentically say we have the state-of-the-art technology in many areas. When the guided missile programme was formulated in 1983, it was decided that when a missile is launched, it should be state-of-the-art. You can rest assured that we can build state-of-the-art systems. We started in 1983. In missile technology, we have taken care of the state-of-the-art."

When India's medium range ballistic missile, Agni, was launched on May 22, 1989, the indigenously developed re-entry technology was fully demonstrated when the nose-cone could withstand a temperature of 3,000 degree celsius on re-entry into the atmosphere. This was despite the temperature inside the Agni payload being 30 deg.C. The four-directional pre-form, used in the nose-cone of the Agni, was made of carbon-carbon material. "We have developed this material, which can withstand high temperature. The warhead technology has been developed and it was delivered on target. Our missiles have mobility. We can move them anywhere we want," he said.

'Phase-shifter ready': India had also developed a phase-shifter for Akash, a medium range air defence surface-to-air missile, currently under development. This phased array radar would track the target and guide the missile to the target.

Only one country was producing this electronic phase-shifter. But the DRDL [Defence Research and Development Laboratory] formed a consortium with academic institutions on developing this. "In two years, we produced it. We are one of the very few countries to have it. This is the result of the consortium approach. We have also identified the Central Electronics Limited, Ghaziabad, to produce it," said Dr. Kalam, who is the director of the country's Integrated Guided Missiles Development Programme (IGMDP).

Prithvi, India's surface-to-surface battlefield tactical missile and Trishul, short-range surface-to-air missile, would go into production in 1992. Akash and Nag, an advanced anti-tank missile, would go into production by 1994. "We have to go through a number of flight trials (of these missiles) and establish (their) performance reliability," he said.

'Decentralise system': Mr. V. Sreenivasan, President, Confederation of Engineering Industry, who inaugurated the celebrations, said India should move away from establishing huge, monolithic industries and go in for

decentralised system of manufacture. This was necessary to solve the problems of unemployment and high-cost economy.

Mr. V. Balasubramanian, grandson of C. Rajam, said he was prepared to provide free consultancy to the students of MIT for their projects. The MIT had programmes to start some intensive courses for undergraduates. The Vice-Chancellor of Anna University, Dr. M. Anandakrishnan, said he was struck by the emotional attachment of the MIT alumni towards their institution.

The Director of MIT, Dr. N.S. Venkataraman, recalled how C. Rajam sold three of his bungalows to raise the money for founding the MIT. Mr. P.S. Subramaniam, Patron, MIT Alumni Association, said the MIT was proud of its former student, Dr. Kalam.

Mr. T.M. Jawaharlal, president of the association, who welcomed the gathering, said the association had built a guesthouse on the MIT campus and also gave away prizes for Rs. [rupees] 10,000 every year to meritorious students. Mr. T.V. Krishnaswamy, secretary, proposed a vote of thanks.

Ground Test of Polar Satellite Launcher

91AS0691A New Delhi PATRIOT in English
26 Feb 91 p 6

[Text] Bangalore, Feb. 25—The fourth stage of polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) totally indigenously developed liquid stage, consisting of two engines, each of 750 kg thrust, was successfully ground tested at the test facilities of the Department of Space (DOS) at Mahendragiri near Kanyakumari, in its flight configuration and for full duration of 415 seconds.

The fourth stage of PSLV developed by the Liquid Propulsion Centre at Thiruvananthapuram is for imparting additional velocity of two km/second to IRS [Indian Remote Sensing] class of satellites just prior to their injection to the final polar orbit at 900 km height.

The realisation of the fourth stage has involved many new technological developments.

Paper Scores 'Misuse' of Governor's Office

91AS0715A Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
20 Feb 91 p 8

[Editorial]

[Text] The misuse of the Governor's office by the Centre has become such an established fact of Indian political life that few can have been surprised by the latest changes in Patna and Madras. Even Mr V.P. Singh's simulated outrage provoked only derision since it was his regime which formally politicized the gubernatorial office and set an obnoxious precedent by initiating a wholesale resignation of Governors so that the National Front could replace them with its own men. In fact, that was, perhaps, the last nail in the gubernatorial coffin.

The Congress(I) has been more honest, for it has refrained from Mr V.P. Singh's hypocritical display of anger and maintained a deafening silence about the manner in which Mr Mohammed Yunus Saleem was shown the door and Mr Suirjit Singh Barnala was forced to resign. The latter was, of course, living on borrowed time, for ever since Mr Karunanidhi's Government was dismissed behind his back, as it were, there was no question of the Congress(I) and the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] acquiescing in his continuance, especially when the Assembly election is expected in a few months.

The choice of the veteran Congressman, Mr Bhishma Narain Singh, as the new incumbent in Madras is not without significance in this context, considering that the new Governor's most recent claim to fame lay in the hasty installation of a minority Congress(I) Government in Shillong in February 1988, when he was Governor of Meghalaya. In a way, Mr Mohammed Yunus Saleem's refusal to deviate from the text prepared for him by the Lallu Prasad Yadav Ministry—as Mr Dharam Vira had done in West Bengal in 1969—helped the Centre to kill two birds with one stone, so to speak, by sacking him and asking Mr Barnala to replace him in the full knowledge that the former Akali Chief Minister would refuse. Mr Saleem's subsequent announcement that he was going to join the Janata Dal suggested that his decision to adhere to the text was as much of a political statement as Mr Dharam Vira's was in skipping a few paragraphs, but that should not distract attention from the fact that the former Bihar Governor was entirely within his rights in acting as he did.

For, as a Supreme Court ruling of May 1979, pointed out, a Governor "is not subordinate or subservient to the Central Government" since he cannot be regarded as its employee. It was not even material, the court observed, that he held office at the pleasure of the President since his was a high Constitutional position. True, a Governor's criticism of the President's action relating to another State can cause embarrassment, but since such high posts are involved, the matter should have been resolved in a more discreet manner instead of serving peremptory dismissal notice and transfer orders. If the Chandra Shekhar Government did not care to act with tact and circumspection, so that the dignity of the Governor's office was not impaired, it was presumably because its need to please the Congress(I) was so great that it simply did not have the time to keep constitutional niceties in mind. In the process, however, it may have harmed its own reputation more than that of the two Governors.

PAKISTAN

U.S. Termed Worst Enemy of Muslims

91AS0601B Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 31 Jan 91 p 5

[Editorial: "Government Policy and the Gulf War"]

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has returned here after visiting various Islamic countries to help stop the

war in Iraq and to establish peace in this region. He met with the leaders in Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia and discussed the situation with them. According to the prime minister, he was very optimistic when he went on this trip and is still very optimistic. He said that his mission is not finished and will continue until the war in the Gulf stops. He also said that he wants the Islamic brotherhood to do anything possible in order to stop the war in the Gulf. He added that stopping a war was never easy and that this war was started after all diplomatic efforts had failed. At a time when the flames of war are rising, it would be unrealistic to hope for immediate results from diplomacy. It appears that Mian Nawaz Sharif has returned from his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina without any results. If he could not succeed in contacting Iraq's president Saddam Husayn, how could we expect him to talk to President Bush who arrogantly wants to give exemplary punishment to Iraq. Therefore, it would be correct to say that Mr. Nawaz Sharif's peace mission has not moved from its starting point.

The situation in our country is impossible now. The majority of our people are not satisfied with our government's policies. The people are openly expressing hatred toward the United States for its position and consider our government's present policy to be a copy of the U.S. policy. A large number of people believe that the recent trip was taken at the insistence of the United States government in order to cool the angry mood of the people. At the same time, we cannot ignore the statements issued by General Mirza Aslam Beg, chief of armed staff. He told the army officers in a speech that the Gulf War resembled Arab-Israel wars of 1948, 1956, and 1967 in which the Arab armies were defeated. However, the illusion of Israel being invincible was broken in 1974. After that the main purpose of the Jewish policy was to make the Arab nation ineffective. Since these could not be defeated by military force, schemes were hatched to have these countries fight each other. Iraq was encouraged to attack Kuwait to find an excuse to start a war. The Western world united against Iraq without trying to find a peaceful solution to this issue. It is true that Iraq is guilty of attacking Kuwait, however, it should have been given more time instead of declaring war against it. Most of the opinions expressed about this war have been contradictory. Politically, the United Nations has given the allied armed forces the mission to liberate Kuwait and not to destroy Iraq. The concern felt in Pakistan about the Gulf is understandable. Our religious feeling is involved as our sacred sites are in danger. The people are more concerned because they have no faith in the United States of America. The cruelty with which the Iraqi citizens are being punished reminds us of the Karbala catastrophe.

The government should think very seriously at this point about the people's feelings and the result of its pro-U.S. attitude. The United States is the worst enemy of the

Islamic world. It wants to protect Israel's future and is ready to destroy Islamic countries in order to establish the "greater Israel." We should not trust the United States or its policies and should continue to cooperate with Iran and other Islamic countries to solve this problem. Iran has an important position in this region and can be successful in solving this issue through negotiations. This could alleviate the situation somewhat. Internally, confidence of people is very important as the government cannot function effectively without this trust. It is hoped that Pakistan's government will respect the feelings of the people and adopt a policy that benefits our nation.

Aid Cut Off Said To Have 'Devastating' Effect on Defense

91AS0660A Lahore THE NATION in English
23 Feb 91 p 7

[Article by Salman Taseer: "Learning To Live With Senator Pressler"]

[Text] In the run-up to the elections of October 1990 a bombshell exploded in Pakistan in the form of the suspension of the United States aid courtesy Senator Pressler. Although the Damocles sword of the Pressler Amendment had been hanging over our heads for a number of years, it was only after the American Government felt that we had outlived our usefulness as a surrogate for their war in Afghanistan, that it was allowed to fall with devastating effect cutting off the \$600 million of aid given to Pakistan. But more deadly still was the freezing of the Security Assistance Programme to the armed forces, which set alarm bells ringing all over the Defence Establishment. Apparently the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan requested the State Department to put the suspension of aid on hold as it was bound to have an impact on the elections scheduled for 24 October. But the request was turned down as Washington clearly felt that its international imperatives took precedence over Pakistan's internal politics.

The first distant rumblings of the storm that was to shake the very foundations of our relationship with the United States came in the form of a visit to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, way back in April 1989, by Ambassador Robert Oakley who informed her that secret reports received by the CIA indicated a level of activity at Kahuta that was unacceptable to his Government. Subsequently, on her visit to the United States in August 1989 the head of the CIA, William Webster, asked for a special meeting in which he once again reiterated the American Government's misgivings. After that, on several other occasions the Americans voiced their apprehensions to the President and the Chief of the Army Staff but could not get the satisfaction they sought leading to the current impasse.

Senator Pressler's amendment to the United States Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 singles out Pakistan specifically and unequivocally lays down that "no assistance

shall be furnished to Pakistan and no military equipment or technology shall be sold or furnished to Pakistan...unless the President (of the United States) shall have certified in writing to the Speaker of the House of Representatives...that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device and that the proposed Assistance Programme will reduce significantly the risk that Pakistan will possess a nuclear explosive device." Like a scorpion, Senator Pressler carries his sting in his tail. The requirement that the Assistance Programme should also reduce the risk that we possess a device, imposes a wide and far reaching responsibility on the President which can be interpreted by the United States Government to ensure that not only do we abandon research at Kahuta but virtually dismantle our capability to the satisfaction of the American Government.

At the present time, the United States Government is applying the suspension of the Security Assistance Programmes as leniently as possible. The Security Assistance Office of the Defence Representative in Pakistan, Brigadier John Howard, has not been closed down and contacts with the armed forces are maintained. The Pakistan Army has received invitations to the Pacific Armies Management Seminar and pricing and availability requirements purchases for defence have been honored allowing Pakistan to plan for the future. Far more important is that the safety flight equipment inventory for the F-16 and other aircraft like the C-130 has been maintained so that our fleet is not grounded yet. The personnel contract for General Dynamics and Pratt Whitney at Sargodha Airbase and Kamrah too has been renewed till June 1991. Similarly, repair contracts on the Stinger systems, Firefinder Radar and Cobra Helicopters have been renewed so as not to debilitate our strike capability. After a great deal of diplomatic activity Pakistan also managed to get vital spare parts released for M48A5 tanks which had been stopped by the American Government when the guillotine came down on 1 October, 1990. Nine ships leased from the United States Government are still with the Pakistan Navy although the lease expired in January 1991 and can be technically reclaimed by the Americans when they choose.

The fact that the Pressler Amendment has been applied leniently does not take away the devastating effect it will have on our defence capability when the Americans choose to bare their fangs. For instance, Pakistan has paid in advance \$70 million to General Dynamics for sixty F-16 fighter aircraft to be delivered over five years till 1996. Not only would the additional aircraft be lost, so would the money paid. There are training contracts, for instance for P3-C Naval Aircraft, which, if frozen, will mean Pakistani pilots will not be able to utilize them. Follow-on support contracts for thirty-seven F-16 planes are due to expire in March 1991 which, if not renewed, would affect the overhaul of their engines, reduce pilot flying hours and seriously affect pilot efficiency. Contractors from Taxila, Kamrah and Sargodha would be withdrawn. Co-production programmes, such as the Hughes and tank M113A, would be cancelled. The

United States Government would ensure that direct commercial sales with American companies are cut off forcing the Pakistan Government to resort to arms dealers and other third-party sources which would be unreliable and far more expensive.

In essence, the Pressler Amendment requires that the United States military assistance as well as transfers and sales of military equipment, spare parts, training, technology transfers, etc, are all terminated on 1 October, 1990. The impact on our defence capability if the United States chooses to abandon the current "sympathetic" attitude and adopts a more hostile approach will have to be carefully weighed, particularly in light of the position on our eastern borders and the war raging in the Gulf. It is clear that the Pakistan Government's decision to send troops to the aid of the American-led coalition in the Gulf was partly due to our vulnerability under the United States pressure. As the full impact of the Pressler Amendment, with all its invidious implications, begins to dawn on policy-makers in Islamabad, there is bound to be a considerable reversal from the previous defiant posture adopted by IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] politicians who talked "of eating grass" rather than abandoning our nuclear programme.

One of the foundations of the "New Order" planned by the United States after their anticipated "victory" in the Gulf war is the destruction of any nuclear capability or technology in the area other than that being developed by Israel and India. As soon as the dust clears over the Arabian Peninsula, one of the first priorities of Washington will be to enforce, in toto, the brainchild of Senator Pressler. So far Islamabad has shown neither the desire nor the ability to lay out a Defence and Foreign Policy strategy independent of the United States. Abject surrender to American global imperatives in exchange for their support for his bestial regime was part of the legacy of General Ziaul Haq and there appears little chance that his successors are planning anything else.

Sharif's Leadership Praised

91AS0660C Lahore THE NATION in English
24 Feb 91 p 9

[Article by A.H. Rizvi: "Nawaz Sharif's 100 Days as Prime Minister"]

[Text] Even if the stickler for novelty would see little new in it, there isn't as yet a better way to start introducing Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif than by establishing his political origin as the rise of an outsider of sorts. This factor promises to become a watershed in the politics of this country. Mr Nawaz Sharif is not the scion of the typically idle and docile landed aristocracy on whom political position is thrust by the accident of birth. As distinct from the Noons, Tiwanas, Ranas, Wattooes, et al, Mr Sharif is the son of a self-made man, and himself one, too.

Essentially distinct though he is from the stereotype of the traditional politico, Mr Sharif is their accredited

leader nonetheless. Here, in fact, lies the real significance of the turn in the trend that the Nawaz Sharif phenomenon proclaims. He represents the transfer of the hold of the levers of political power from the inheritors to the achievers. This confluence of quality from the countryside, and the talent in the urban new generation, is what the country has been waiting for.

If this new process is to yield its full promise, much would depend on the way Mr Nawaz Sharif charts his course through the whirls and shoals of the forces of reaction and hereditary privilege which are very much around. These traditional wielders of power are by no means ecstatic about the winds of change which are not quite to their established taste.

It is now Mr Nawaz Sharif's personal and political destiny to either sail his ship to the happy isle like the proverbial Odysseus did, or to ground it, or even wreck and ruin it. A country which is not twice bitten but bitten over and over again is bound to be excessively wary. But, as a people who have always managed to rise from their own self-wrought calamities, Pakistanis must be exceptionally durable material. They have survived miraculously. Their very birth in blood and fire is little short of a marvel.

The point to emphasize is that Mr Nawaz Sharif represents a breed the people of Pakistan do welcome with some mixed feelings though. The reason is that this is a material they are experimenting with for the first time. Everybody at home and abroad is watching how Mr Nawaz Sharif is shaping, or can be expected to shape, as the precursor of a new era of bilateral politics of pragmatism as distinct from the politics of ideology and dogma.

In the first place, it must be conceded that Mr Nawaz Sharif has not been in office and power for long enough to be tested on an unkind touchstone. He's been around just about 100 days. And these have been days of unmerciful stress and strain. From the very first moment he has found himself subjected to a barrage of political onslaught verging on calumny. The attack on his very bona fides has been harsh and strident. With the kind of mandate he has behind him, he could have given back as good as he got. To the surprise even of his foes, Mr Sharif's response to shrapnel has been polite patience. Quite obviously, he means to bring in a new moderate-key political culture. If that really be so, it should augur well for all.

So far, Mr Sharif has given a pretty plausible impression of trying to ingratiate with his overly articulate Opposition. He has spoken often enough of bipartisanship in basic state policies, particularly in the field of foreign affairs. He has persevered in this, the Opposition stalwarts' rather curt and off-handish response notwithstanding. This too, augurs rather well.

What we already see is a remarkably matured Nawaz Sharif: the confrontationist Chief Minister of Punjab is now a sedately conciliatory Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Conciliation, healing of wounds, bridging of gulfs, search for national consensus are visible in relief on his banner. The man appears to have grown with the job. Again, a happy augury by any standards.

Another positive sign is that the transition from the Chief Minister of a Province, albeit the largest, to Prime Minister has also made Nawaz Sharif notably conscious of the value of the spoken word on the one hand, and of silence on the other. He was never a loquacious person. But today, he usually keeps his thoughts to himself or his trusted ones and would not articulate them until he is certain it is the right moment and he has the proper word for it.

Maybe, this is the flowering of a natural gift of reticence, or a lesson imbibed from the embarrassment his predecessor so frequently ran herself into, and so needlessly. Mr Nawaz Sharif may be faulted for being less communicative, or even expressive, at moments but nobody can accuse him of tooting his own trumpet out of season. (He might consider advising Radio Pakistan and PTV not to fall to the temptation—of disease of trying to be more loyal than the King). It is not easy to suspect that Mr Nawaz Sharif is the insatiable publicity-hungry politico many of his predecessors have been, or were persuaded to be by smooth-tongue flatterers.

The young Prime Minister is manifestly a consensus man. How else could anyone get together a coalition of well over half a dozen parties (not counting and equal number or more of non-parties) in the first place? It is sometimes possible to hold such a gathering together for a breezy sprint, like going into a snap election. But to keep them all from falling apart after the election excitement is over and the fruits distributed, is no ordinary feat. The more so when the thankless job of governing begins, bringing in the flak. It is no ordinary run-of-the-mill operator who keeps such a diverse cast and keeps the show going. So far, the show has gone on without much of a murmur or whimper. That takes some doing, doesn't it?

The virtually 'infinite variety' of Mr Nawaz Sharif's team has so far proved to be his invaluable asset as well as an achievement. It reinforces his image as a captain who keeps his team well disciplined and loyally doing his bidding. But a company such as the one Mr Sharif keeps at the moment may need some loadshedding, sooner or later. One would expect the Prime Minister to know the ripe moment when it arrives to say farewell to some welcome aboard to some others. That's very much a part of the game of politics, of practical politics, that is.

Those who talk less are usually noted for their capacity to invest their intellect and energy in solid work. There is an eternal variance between men of word and men of deed.

Mr Nawaz Sharif has demonstrated that, given goodwill, some of the most ticklish, even risk-laden tasks can be undertaken. For four decades Federal Governments had remained so unsure that they continued to brush the

difficult problems under the carpet, beguiling themselves that the problems would somehow sort themselves out with the passage of time. That was a strategy which, in actual fact, was the escapism of the feeble. Mr Nawaz Sharif made history by going ahead to open (what many of his senior advisors advised against) the Pandora's boxes.

The Prime Minister has merited general appreciation by going ahead with the convening of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) as well as the National Finance Commission. There can be no doubt at all that the issues which have been left unresolved over two generations of Pakistan have generated misunderstandings on a political plane and maladjustments on the economic plane. The worst harm has been the generation of simmering mistrust among the various units of the federation.

The failure of the preceding governments to listen to the complaints of the provinces and to address genuine needs in good time, has inflicted much agony on this country's deepest susceptibilities. These unlovely bruises had to be embalmed one day. Mr Nawaz Sharif has boldly brought that day nearer. He has demonstrated that he is ready to come to terms with the realities. This has been one of his most bold, brave and wise act to date. It could not have been possible without towering courage and uncanny wisdom. This without doubt has been an act of faith.

As Tennysons' brook sings, "Men may come and men may go..." So, it is with leaders. Some leave behind a name and fame, some come, stay a while and then are heard of no more. The difference between the two varieties is that the first type make their mark on the march of time which the ravages of time fail to obliterate. The second variety leave no such mark. Mian Nawaz Sharif has set a trend in motion which promises to become a tide before long, or in the fullness of time. It is a process of liberalizing and deregulating the major sector of production of national wealth.

In daily journalistic jargon it is called denationalization. In essence, this process, initiated by the Nawaz Sharif government, is one of releasing the nations' capabilities to create wealth from its nature-blessed resources in hopefully the most efficacious manner, eliminating waste of material, time and human ingenuity and creativity. If energies and resources thus released are harnessed with honesty and dedication, the people can look forward to plenty at payable prices.

The revolution which Mr Nawaz Sharif is seeking to set in motion has the promise to change the face of the country. But that is not what is the most important and significant aspect of this programme. This reform should not only contribute to our prosperity but also make us worthy of that prosperity. Why? Simply because it would be something attained by our own effort—a fruit of self-help, self-reliance and ultimately freedom from going around, hat in hand.

An unmistakable evidence of Mr Sharif's immense capacity for quiet and diligent work and commitment to

the values he cherishes has been his performance in the field of foreign relations and international diplomacy. His marathon travels in search of peace in the Gulf has been a monumental exercise, the most notable for the fact that it was undertaken indomitably by one whom the old foreign Office Brahmins would consider something less of a knowledgeable novice. This has been a remarkable feat, irrespective of any consideration.

The leadership of Nawaz Sharif holds out no small promise. This hope, so far, is based almost entirely upon the qualities of his person as perceived by the ordinary observers, watching from a distance. In the public eye, Nawaz Sharif is a modest, urbane, publicity-shy, beaver-like tireless operator. Let's say, he is seen by most unbiased Pakistanis as one of them—hence to be trusted. Whether Nawaz Sharif is also to be admired, only Nawaz Sharif himself and time will tell. That people wish him well is because they would like to trust him and also because if he does well, all would stand to benefit.

Benazir Bhutto Said to Call U.S. Efforts Barbaric

91AS0601E Karachi AMN in Urdu 27 Jan 91 p 6

[Article: "Benazir Calls To End Barbaric Bombing of Iraq"]

[Text] Karachi, 26 January (staff reporter)—Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, former prime minister and the present leader of the opposition in the National Assembly, said that demonstrations in support of Iraq in Islamic countries are being carried out in reaction to heavy bombing in Iraq. She told the CNN in an interview in Washington that such barbaric bombing should be stopped immediately. The PPP [Pakistan People's Party] secretariat has issued details of this interview in Karachi. Benazir also mentioned the appeal she had issued to the U.S. President and the UN General Secretary before the war was started requesting that the deadline given to Iraq be extended and she and the Pakistani government should be given the opportunity to visit Baghdad to persuade it to accept the UN resolutions. Benazir added that she had expressed the concern felt by Pakistani people about the military action and had felt that this issue was a mutual affair of Islamic countries and should have been settled by them. She went on to say that this war might turn an Islamic issue into an issue between Islam and the Western world. Benazir was asked why she was bringing in religion to this conflict between different countries. She had replied that the cause of this conflict was probably the deep feeling for the Islamic character in Muslim countries. She further replied that the Muslims believe in one God and pray to the Qibla [point of adoration in obligatory prayer] in Mecca; therefore, despite many hostilities among themselves, the Muslims consider these their own problems and want to solve them themselves. She concluded that the Pakistani army was not to be used in the war.

Bureaucracy Seen Opposing Privatization

91AS0660B Lahore THE NATION in English
26 Feb 91 p 8

[Article by Ikram Sehgal: "Opening Up the Economy"]

[Text] The Nawaz Sharif Government has instituted far reaching changes in the foreign currency regulations in a bid to make the domestic climate more conducive to foreign investment. This marks one of the most fundamental of the reforms needed to revitalize the economy and one must commend the courage of the present regime, especially the PM and the Finance Minister. All these changes were on the anvil during the previous PPP [Pakistan People's Party] Government but unfortunately Ms Benazir mixed up her priorities, economic options were waylaid by personal greed of some of her partymen and close relatives. Rumors abound that Senator Dr Mahbubul Haq was about to attempt such a departure from the norms when he was Finance Minister, the credit must rightly go to the mature, confident and unassuming Sartaj Aziz for ushering in these changes. Honesty in day-to-day dealing and a feet-on-the-ground approach accomplishes much more than flamboyant rhetoric dedicated to self-propagation.

The most important step has been to allow free movement of foreign exchange in and out of the country in conjunction with allowing Pakistanis and foreigners to own and freely operate foreign currency accounts within and outside the country. Like Hong Kong and Dubai, Pakistan has become a free exchange area. This major step removes the psychological mindset and physical roadblock discouraging foreign investment, particularly private entrepreneurship. All our top businessmen have been maintaining foreign accounts illegally, by making it legal a mere technicality has been waived. There are risks manifest in loosening such controls, some suspect our currency may end up like in Latin America with rapid depreciation of the Pakistani Rupee against the U.S. dollar with possible flight of capital. On the other hand, we have an economy which is buttressed by strong, positive factors like food autarky, a wide range of skilled blue and white collar manpower and an innovative, enterprising population with an avid and keen approach to commerce and industry.

Allowing foreign companies permission to borrow unlimited amount from local and foreign finance institutions and purchase of shares at will on the Stock Exchanges, private limited companies partnership, etc., is again an opportunity to revive our sick industries particularly in the textile sector. Due to the elimination of foreign exchange controls, foreign private investors could purchase controlling interest in various idle industrial and commercial units at comparatively cheap cost, pump in badly needed capital and expertise to revive their functioning, thereby bringing these units back into the economic mainstream. There is always a danger of their taking the money away later to other ventures

abroad but they cannot take the revived industry physically away. Without the commercial sophistication and technical expertise that foreign entrepreneurs can bring into Pakistan, we cannot hope to compete effectively in the open foreign markets.

Given that our primary agriculture produce is raw cotton, to translate that commodity into value-added products, one cannot stop at producing textiles alone but one should go on to an extensive garment industry and other downstream production. With the cost of labor in the Four Tigers, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore becoming relatively expensive, teeth-to-tail exploitation of our national raw cotton wealth would mean an economic boom for us. The present economic and industrial wealth of the aforementioned nations originated mainly in their garment industries, phasing out gradually to electronics and then onto other medium and heavy industries including the high-tech field. Given that we have a far advanced production base in a wide spectrum of industries, we are better equipped than these nations in achieving economic prosperity.

The State Bank of Pakistan has now confirmed officially that effective since March 1, 1991 Letters of Credit (LCs) can be opened up in most cases without obtaining import licenses from the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports (CCI&E). Again, this is both a symbolic and physical delinking from artificial public sector controls suffocating the economy. Rather than bureaucratic checks, market realities would govern the imports of a wide range of commodities and items. It is true that these may be of individual risk to importers since everyone and his uncle may rush to import a particular item in great demand causing excess supply against requisite demand and commensurate drop in prices. Artificially created favorite-trader monopolies are destroyed by this option, with informed credit institutions making a merit-based decision based on their evaluation of (1) market requirement and (2) profitability. This is a significant step to eradicate bureaucratic corruption which has bedeviled Pakistan since its creation. One must accept individual corporate disaster in contrast to the great boon to the common man who will have a choice of a variety of freely imported items at competitive prices.

The delaying of official bureaucratic notifications to match the PM's announcement highlights the civil administration's unspoken resistance, aghast at these "radical" changes that terminates their in-built ability to control market forces which is their "Sword of Damocles" over individual businessmen. The bureaucracy is thus deeply aggrieved. Planted rumors abound about a change in Government, ostensibly for other reasons but mainly because Nawaz Sharif is not going according to the planned bureaucratic script. Ms Benazir had similar ambitions to open up the economy but she was hamstrung by a number of other reasons, including bureaucratic foot-dragging. That these changes are being effected by an ex-bureaucrat, Sartaj Aziz, is of great credit to the PM and to the Finance Minister personally.

There is certainly some danger in the running wild of the economy, our institutions are resilient enough to withstand those extraneous pressures that would imperil our hopes for economic emancipation, particularly because a parallel black economy has been operating in any case. Plans cannot be complete without making a few other important concurrent reforms in the energy and taxation sectors, given that the communications field in being given due emphasis.

The energy sector is greatly insufficient to even energize the existing sick industries. While WAPDA [Water and Power Development Authority], KESC [Karachi Electric Supply Corporation] and other government utilities have worked to the best of their ability, this ability has never been put to test against the competitiveness of the private sector as these institutions cannot carry the future load all by themselves in the public sector. Their distribution facilities are corrupt and woefully inefficient and they need to be privatized so that the revenues they should actually generate comes back to the public coffers. The Ministry of Water and Power has totally failed to encourage the private sector to invest in viable projects, certain individuals in this particular bureaucracy are suspect in their competence, intention and honesty. Unless such characters are removed from the controls of private power investment, potential investors in energy sector will remain shy in Pakistan. Every initiative that the government takes will fail because of the shortage of energy. Let energy development be treated as any other industry and a reasonable tariff be offered to private entrepreneurs, particularly for using indigenous sources that will fuel electricity into our industrial grid.

Individual taxes make up Rs [rupees] 3.5 billion out of the total Rs 15 billion revenues collected from income taxes. This Rs 3.5 billion (rendered by 500,000 salaried and 500,000 self-employed) is chicken-feed (less than 3%) of the total government revenues of Rs 120 billion. If the government were to enact positive reforms in the taxation sector by abolishing individual income tax at the Federal level in favor of community taxes imposed by Local Bodies this would make a psychological and physical change to a tax-haven status, an open invitation to private foreign enterprise. The decisions for fundamental reforms must not be delayed. Besides, the commercial feasibility of such an option it is morally incorrect to make 1 million people pay to maintain a nation of over 100 million just because they may be more hard-working, better educated and/or more enterprising.

In sum total, the changes announced by the Government are welcome, the momentum must be maintained. Man-made obstacles remain, elaborate technical ambushes have been planned by the entrenched bureaucracy which has not taken kindly to the changes made. It is in the interest of democracy that the Opposition should not fall into the trap of bureaucratic manipulation to change the Government. One surmises that, except for a die-hard few, all democratic elements want freedom. Economic

freedom always goes ahead of political freedom and can only be obtained by unshackling the economy from the grips of bureaucracy.

Sindh Chief Minister's Human Rights Violations Condemned

91AS0660D Lahore *THE NATION* in English
21 Feb 91 pp 1, 10

[Article by Ahmed Rashid: "The Gulf in Sindh Widening"]

[Text] The most dangerous man for the future stability of the Nawaz Sharif Government is not Saddam Husayn or rivals such as Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Benazir Bhutto. It is the Prime Minister's own Chief Minister in Sindh province—Jam Sadiq Ali. The Jam is now governing Sindh in a manner that is pushing the province to the edge of a volcanic eruption which could engulf both the government and the democracy.

This week at least seven former PDA MPAs [Pakistan Democratic Alliance] [Members of Provincial Assembly] have been arrested on trumped up charges. The police raids that netted former MPAs Hanif Soldier, Abdul Hakim Baluch and Lal Baksh Bhutto on Tuesday night bear all the hallmarks of a return to a police state. Their houses were raided at 2 pm and no warrants for their arrest were presented. The entire PPP [Pakistan People's Party] leadership in Sindh is now either under arrest or has gone underground. Former Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah is reportedly enjoying the hospitality of the Chief Minister in Quetta to avoid the Jam's wrath.

In a devastating indictment compiled by Iqbal Haider, a PPP leader, in Karachi, according to which hundreds of PPP leaders, supporters and their families have been arrested, tortured, brutalized and harassed. In "the Preliminary Report on State Terrorism, Political Victimization and gross violation of human rights in Sindh from August to December 1990", Mr Haider lists 284 people who have been arrested in November and December. Since then that figure has grown to 1,000 and if those arrested after the dismissal of the Bhutto Government in August are taken into account, at least 2,000 PPP supporters have been arrested in the past seven months. The report, which has not been contradicted by the Sindh Government carries the testimony of women, minors and distant family members of PPP workers, who have been harassed indiscriminately.

Other reports from Sindh speak of the indiscriminate way that the Jam is manipulating the police force and the bureaucracy to carry out mass intimidation and arrests. The law and order institutions in Sindh have already been bludgeoned almost beyond repair in seven years of ethnic and dacoit violence. They are now being further perverted to ensure that police officers and DC's [Deputy Commissioner] lose what little respect the populace may still hold for them. Some senior bureaucrats

and police officials have expressed their anger and hatred at what the Sindh Government is making them do to keep their jobs.

Most of Jam's Ministers are now distancing themselves from this rampage, except for Irfanullah Khan Marwat, Adviser on Home Affairs and the son-in-law of the President, who has gone out of way to prove that the crackdown is justified and in the interests of law and order. There are now belated but serious rumblings in the Muslim League against the Jam's vendetta, which is simply geared to crush the PPP like cockroaches. Muslim League MNA's [Members of National Assembly] within the IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] have warned Nawaz Sharif that more damage is being done to the Government's authority and credibility by the Jam than by the policies of Saddam Husayn or the talk about changes in Islamabad.

The Jam points to the relative peace in Karachi and Hyderabad as to how successful he has been, but there have been no long term solutions. There is only a lid on the violence seething below. Even then the interior of the province is emanating that strange and quiet lull before a violent storm is due to crash down. Ethnic hatred is just below the surface in Hyderabad and Sukkur, as was demonstrated in the February 9th violence in Sukkur, when 16 people were killed. The MQM cannot, but feel even more insecure by the Jam's actions because even the MQM knows there is a limit as to how much intimidation the Sindhis under the PPP banner are prepared to accept.

The tragedy in Sindh has only been accentuated by the complete disregard that two prominent leaders have shown to the province. The Prime Minister has taken little interest in the province and has absolved himself of the rampage by his careful and quite obvious silence. It is as though Islamabad had nothing to do with Sindh and the government were treating it as a foreign country alleged a critic he added that the Nawaz Sharif Government has given a free hand to Jam to carry out whatever excesses are necessary to destroy the PPP and ensure that their MPAs do not vote in the forthcoming elections for the Senate.

There has also been almost total silence by the globe trotting leader of the PPP-Benazir Bhutto. Ms Bhutto has refused to whip up a campaign against the Government for its excesses in Sindh or to support her workers or even to visit their homes and offer them some tea and sympathy. The accepted wisdom in the PPP is that the fate of her husband Asif Ali Zardari is far more important than the lives of her party workers in Sindh and if there is to be a deal with the Government at some stage over Mr Zardari, her silence will give her plus points. The effect of this on the PPP in Sindh needs no telling. There is now a bitterness and open hatred against Benazir Bhutto within the Sindh PPP that would shame the likes of any political leader with a modicum of intelligence. The Jam is counting on this—Bhutto's

silence and acquiescence to what is happening in Sindh in return for her husband at some future date.

Sindh is also now major human rights issue, where torture, harassment, arrests without cause and trials without cause and trials without evidence are becoming the norm. With such a massive national mandate does the IJI Government really need such draconian measures to ensure its survival. In Sindh at least public opinion is rapidly shifting away from belief that political governments can heal ethnic rifts or improve human rights. If there is a growing feeling in Sindh, amongst both Muhajirs and Sindhis that Martial Law would rescue them from politicians and be better than the present state of affairs, the government can only be held responsible for this new and highly dangerous mood. Some Sindhis go as far to believe, that the Jam's actions are in fact precisely to provoke a massive hemorrhaging of the system, so that Martial Law is the only alternative.

The Jam's performance in Sindh, unchecked by the President, the Government, the IJI, the National Assembly or by anyone is eventually going to cripple the IJI's credibility. It will ensure that whatever efforts the NPP [National People's Party] or the Muslim League may be trying to make, to wean away Sindhis from the PPP, is completely subverted.

For the IJI the issue in Sindh should not be the single minded crushing of the PPP, it should be an ability to use it's mandate to heal wounds and ensure future stability for the system. The way the Jam is going, Sindh may well soon be engulfed with ethnic warfare on a scale this country has never seen before.

Developed Countries Said Practicing Technological Imperialism

91AS0600C Karachi JANG in Urdu 22 Jan 91 p 3

[Editorial: "Capability to Build Nuclear Power Plant"]

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan predicted that Pakistan will be able to build a nuclear power plant by the end of this century. He also mentioned the difficulties our peaceful nuclear program was facing and said that a form of technological imperialism was being imposed on the Third World countries. No intelligent person would disagree with the president's analysis that the developed countries are very unfair to the Third World countries in the area of technology as well as in commerce and industry. They have developed a selfish mentality to keep us from making progress in these areas. They have especially tried to keep the Islamic countries from developing technological expertise. However, after accepting all this, we have one question. There are many Third World countries that have made laudable progress in peaceful use of nuclear technology. What is the reason that none of them have built even one nuclear power house even though they have all the needed resources, training, and knowledge? We admit that the Western world, especially the United States, has not left any trick unused in making sure that we do not acquire nuclear

technology. The whole world knows the role the United States played in getting our agreement with France canceled. We also grant that the nuclear technology is not just another industrial branch and there are many problems associated with it. However, no patriotic Pakistani can accept the fact that we could not build even one nuclear plant in 15 to 20 years. Our nuclear scientists have repeatedly told us that we have this capability. We think that our leaders should stop complaining about the negative attitude of developed countries and focus on removing flaws in their policies. They should investigate with full honesty and find out if there are elements in our own country that are hindering our progress in the development of nuclear technology. Our leaders should understand one thing clearly: In leadership, in poverty, in royalty, [or] in slavery; nothing is won without reckless bravery.

U.S. Claimed To Oppose Efforts of Muslim Countries

91AS0600A Karachi JANG in Urdu 19 Jan 91 p 3

[Editorial: "Danger of Gulf War Spreading"]

[Text] A very dangerous and destructive war has begun with the United States and its allies' attack on Iraq. The U.S. and allied airplanes have started to make Iraq's military installations and urban population their targets. The allied forces have evoked the memory of Hiroshima by dropping thousands of tons of bombs. The United States claims that it has destroyed Iraq's air force and the crucial military installations while Iraq claims that it has downed 74 U.S. planes and that its air force and important military installations are totally safe. We have also learned of the destruction of two hospitals and the deaths of 500 people in Iraq as a result of U.S. bombings. The most disturbing news is that the U.S. attacks have also damaged holy places like Hazrat Imam Moosa Kazim and Ghaush Alazam Abdul Qadir Jeelani's tombs in Baghdad. The United States has also attacked Karbala and Najaf Ashrif; however, the attackers were chased away by Iraqi airplanes according to our sources. The sphere of the war in the Gulf is spreading every minute. Iraq has also attacked Saudi Arabia and Bahrain and there is fear of Israel joining the war. Israel has threatened Jordan that it would not stay quiet if Jordan allowed Iraqi airplanes to use its air space for attacking Israel. The most deplorable side of this war is that the United States and its allies have mostly targeted Iraqi civilian population in their attacks and have bombed hospitals and holy Islamic places thus ignoring Geneva Convention principles. This has angered the Muslims in the whole world. President Bush is telling us again and again that the purpose of this war is to destroy Iraq's nuclear installations. It means that the United States does not want any Islamic country to become a nuclear power. No doubt, the whole thing started with Iraq's attack on Kuwait. Had the United States and its allies wanted to keep the sphere of war limited, they would have tried just to expel Iraq from Kuwait. The war would not have spread if they had attacked only Kuwait.

Destruction from war could also have been reduced if the goals were also limited. Suggestion by Colonel al-Qadhafi, the Libyan president, that the attack should have been limited to Kuwait and the war should have been ended after Kuwait was liberated, should be given attention. However, direct air attacks on Baghdad and other cities in Iraq as well as on military installations, forced Iraq to attack Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. There is a fear that this war might spread from this region to the rest of the world. This could end the human race. Gorbachev, the Soviet president, has appealed to Saddam Husayn once more telling him that the war would end if he would leave Kuwait. We pray that the opposing countries use common sense, give up their stubbornness, and save the world from destruction by limiting the sphere of the war. The details of the results of two days of war indicate that the countries affected by this war will be turned into rubble if the war continues. If it comes to using nuclear weapons, then the human race and human civilization that took centuries to develop would be annihilated. As a scientist once said, the fourth world war would be fought in the Stone Age.

Editorial Praises Agreement With India

91AS0652C Karachi JANG in Urdu 30 Jan 91 p 3

[Editorial: "Indo-Pakistan Relations: Crucial Progress"]

[Text] Some very important progress has been made in finalizing the agreement between India and Pakistan which calls for not attacking each other's nuclear installations and which was first discussed during Zia's administration. High commissioners of both countries have exchanged the ratified documents and this agreement became effective immediately. The history of Pakistan's relations with India is rampant with suspicions, mistrust, and disbelief. This was the reason for the delay in exchanging the documents of the agreement not to attack each other's sensitive nuclear installations. However, the completion of this stage is a welcome development. This also indicates that the leaders of both countries are ready to forget the bitter experiences of the past and to travel on the road to peace. Efforts for peace are getting more and more support. Both countries are well aware of the destructions of war and want to reduce the danger of such wars.

Exports Reported Increasing

91AS0601F Karachi JANG in Urdu 23 Jan 91 p 6

[Article: "Export Increases Between November and December 1990"]

[Text] Karachi (commerce reporter)—Pakistan exported goods worth 12.804 million rupees between the months of November and December 1990. The corresponding figure for the period between October and November 1990 was 11.241 million rupees. Pakistan's exports increased 3.9 percent in December 1989. This increase was up to 31.5 percent by December 1990. According to

the Federal Bureau of Statistics, Pakistan's exports totaled 58.679 million from July to December 1990. The exports figure for the last year was 45.098 million rupees. Other figures for exports in December 1990 are: cotton yarn 1.921 million rupees, ready-made garments 1.279 million rupees, cotton fabrics 1.128 million rupees, knitwear 0.817 million rupees, synthetic fabrics 0.729 million rupees, bed wear 0.706 million rupees, leather 0.643 million rupees, rice 0.443 million rupees, towels 0.407 million rupees, leather goods 0.399 million rupees, cotton 0.367 million rupees, petroleum products 0.262 million rupees, and fish 0.137 million rupees.

Editorial Urges Fixed Tenures for Civil Servants

91AS0704A Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
28 Feb 91 p 4

[Article: "Paid for Not Working"]

[Text] This paper has pointed out even earlier that appointments in Grade 21 and above should have fixed tenures. In this way, an officer would stand automatically retired at the end of his tenure, thus making way for the next in the line of promotion, and avoiding a lot of unnecessary heart-burning. This last can also be avoided if the practice of temporarily consigning officers to limbo under the label OSD [Officers on Special Duty] is discontinued. A report in the press informs us that four such Officers on Special Duty have been given postings after a considerable delay. The special duty part is the height of irony inasmuch as OSDs are made to sit idle at government expense for as long as it suits the fancy of their superiors, or of a government having newly come into power. Every single incoming government decides that some officers were the blue-eyed boys of its predecessor and gives them the punishment of remaining without an appointment for a considerable period of time.

The fact of the matter is that any officer arousing the ire of a superior or happening to be holding a key post at the time of the induction of a new government, finds himself sitting behind a desk doing nothing at government expense, sooner or later. This is entirely wrong. These officers are basically competent and the pick of the lot when selected by the Public Service Commission.

The talents of the top echelon of the bureaucracy should not be allowed to rust by tucking them away as OSDs. Either an officer should be elevated to a key post only after having proved himself, or if he has been promoted for other than routine considerations and then proves unequal to the assignment given to him, there are remedies in the relevant rules of service. Only recently, this newspaper carried the news that 40 senior government servants were twiddling their thumbs as OSDs. This is a very grave state of affairs since four score officers are being paid from the government exchequer for not doing a spot of work. It would be in the fitness of things if an officer was removed from one post only when there was another post vacant for him. Clearly, the

careers of civil servants cannot be left to whims and fancies of individuals, to be made or marred arbitrarily.

Controversy Arises Over Census

Said Key to Make Up of Country

91AS0655A Karachi DAWN in English 17 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 16: A major political storm awaits the Sindh province as the initial data gathered by the census officials shows a massive shift in the balance of urban-rural population—unacceptable to both the MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] and the rest of the country.

The data has come following the completion of the housing census which included a column giving the number of inmates of the house—a clause which was meant to get initial estimates of the population for which the census would begin next month.

“There is a marked increase in the population of interior Sindh and, at places, the increase is over 770 percent,” an official with access to the data said.

But an MQM MNA [Member of National Assembly], who did not want to be named, told Dawn on Saturday the “MQM would never accept the results if they change the urban population from the present 40 percent to a mere 20 percent of Sindh.”

Unofficial figures of the housing census show that the population of Sindh has increased in the last 10 years by an average 172 percent—112 percent in Hyderabad and Karachi combined, and between 770 percent and 46 percent in the rest of the province.

The highest increase has been registered in Naushero Feroze taluka where the population shot up from 351,000 in 1981 to over three million in 1991.

In other cities the increases were as under: Jacobabad 288 percent, Sukkur 265, Shikarpur 272, Larkana 397, Nawabshah 46, Dadu 357, Hyderabad 135, Badin 77, Sanghar 315, Tharparkar 196, Thatta 199, Karachi 89 and Naushero Feroze 77.1.

The actual population figures calculated from the housing census data are as follows: Jacobabad 3.9 million, Sukkur 4 million, Shikarpur 2.3 million, Larkana 4.6 million, Nawabshah 2.4 million, Khairpur 0.42 million, Dadu 3.9 million, Hyderabad 4.8 million, Badin 1.32 million, Sanghar 3.83 million, Tharparkar 4.44 million, Thatta 2.27 million, Karachi 10.33 million, Naushero Feroze 3 million.

The census result is the key to the entire political and economic set-up of the country, says the official. “It means a re-arrangement of National Assembly and provincial assembly seat, distribution of national resources on the basis of new figures and virtually a shift in the power structure of the country.”

Said Lacking in Credibility

91AS0655B Karachi DAWN in English 18 Feb 91 p 6

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Could the census in Sindh turn out to be an expensive yet futile exercise? The tendency of the polarized groups to bring the reliability and veracity of the initial data into question is already creating a backdrop of rejection of census findings, regardless of what they may turn out to be. The census is no academic exercise. Its findings form the basis of representation in the federal and provincial legislatures and delimitation of constituencies and resource allocation. They also have a vital bearing on planning and priorities of development as well as employment and admission quotas for urban and rural areas. There is no pretending that the “truths” that emerge on the basis of the census would not prove unpalatable or difficult to accept. This is, however, no reason to avoid truth: it has an inescapable reality of the sort that people in Sindh are already living with. The point to note is that the census process—its organization, conduct and, let us not hesitate to say, the integrity and motivation of enumerators and supervisors—is not of the sort that would carry conviction with a wide spectrum of opinion and make its findings generally acceptable.

An intimation of the likely contention over the matter is provided by some of the extraordinary shifts and patterns relating to population increases in Sindh that are evident from the facts turned up by the recently concluded housing census. These are bound to prove controversial and make the final outcome of the Great Count suspect in the eyes of many. Since objections on this score would seem likely to arise from the ethnic and rural and urban divisions of Sindh's society involving vital socio-economic and political interests, the form of protest or rejection could be tragically unsettling. Objections could well be voiced in good faith and sustainable in terms of lack of credence and deliberate falsifications; but they are also likely to spring from a feeling of mutual distrust and antipathy that unfortunately plagues Sindh's ethnic relations and, by extension, its politics. There is a strong likelihood that any ‘inconvenient’ or ‘unpalatable’ findings of the census would be rejected, rendering the fund of information, data and conclusions derived from it inoperative and of no practical value.

There is reason, thus, to examine the wisdom of proceeding with the exercise as planned—in Sindh particularly. At present, its credibility, which is crucial to its acceptance and implementation, is virtually nil. There are no instant measures to restore public confidence and faith in the administrative process designed for the purpose, and make its impartiality convincing. In the given context, census findings in Sindh are probably impossible to obtain and announce with any degree of conviction about their being reasonably correct and authentic. A great deal in the strained communal relations in the province has to change and the shattered

norms of honesty and integrity in dealing with matters of overriding public importance restored to make the exercise genuine and acceptable.

Until this happens, decennial projections on the basis of existing data would probably offer a more reliable and acceptable working basis for decisions with regard to legislative representation, resource allocation, job and admission quotas and so forth than any census conducted in the present highly polarized political and social climate. There is a case for postponing the census in Sindh, even while the process continues in other provinces. When it has been successfully concluded in the other provinces, the authorities here might be better placed to set up the necessary machinery and enlist and train the personnel of the right kind to ensure the honesty and authenticity of the process here as well.

Figures Said Exaggerated

91AS0655C Karachi DAWN in English
26 Feb 91 pp 4-5 (Supplement)

[Article by Izharul Hasan Burney; quotation marks as published]

[Text] Pakistan's fifth decennial census has been postponed indefinitely amidst reports of highly exaggerated figures of population growth in Sindh, particularly in the rural areas.

Although the postponement has been announced on the plea of an amending ordinance which could not be placed before the parliament in time, it appears that the staggering figure of 51 million plus population for Sindh (compared to 19 million in 1981) forced the deferment.

The indication of this incomprehensible population explosion became available through the House Listing operation in December last which inter-alia included columns about the family size.

This is the second time since Independence that a census has been postponed. The third decennial census was delayed for a year owing to the events in former East Pakistan in 1971.

In the present case, the incredible situation is the result of a fallout of the October General Elections in which ethnic and linguistic issues were whipped up and political polarization was accentuated to the extreme in Sindh Province in particular.

"Shumar karoa, Sindh bachao" posters in the interior of Sindh besides certain public pronouncements reflected the fears of the numerical balance tilting to the disadvantage of the Old Sindhis.

While the fate of the census hangs in the balance, it seems that the decision to include the three controversial columns in the form prescribed for House Listing was not correct. These three columns seek information about the head of the household, the number of family members (male and female), and those who are out of the

country. What else do you need to know for the Big Count? The rest is all details.

In House Listing, particulars of the premises could be recorded without questioning the residents. To list the size and composition of the family, the enumerator had to get in touch with the inmates of the home. That caused misgivings among the people who thought exercises. For Census-91, however, the authorities decided to combine the two. They also decided to benefit from this amalgamated method for achieving a higher degree of accuracy and reliability, well-placed sources said. This, besides House Listing, the aim of the first phase was to prepare a frame work for the Big Count. After every house/premises has been listed, the chance of left-out pockets of population could be greatly minimized.

The count columns were inserted to take the respondents unawares and get from them correct information about the size of the household. The information so obtained during the course of House Listing was to be compared with the previous census in order to identify areas/settlements, etc where statements of respondents might have been exaggerated. This would help in taking remedial measures at the time of the Big Count. For this reason, neither the House Listing forms nor the information contained in them would be available to the enumerators or any other member of the field staff. The respondents who lied during the course of the House Listing operation would not also remember exactly what fictitious figures they might have mentioned three months earlier.

The inconsistency, if any, would be detected through the OMR (Optic Mark Reader) computer technology being used for the first time in Pakistan. This was a sort of lie detector.

Unless there are valid reasons for an extraordinary rise or fall in population in any given area/town it would be placed on the "suspect list" calling for extra precautionary measures at the time of the Big Count. The remedial steps would include increase in the number of enumerators and other field staff, strict supervision and control and intensive cross-check.

The "suspected" areas could also be placed on the list for "cluster checking" besides the comprehensive 10 percent follow-up census as on previous occasions, the sources said. Already there were several checks and precautions to achieve accuracy. New methods were to be devised to further strengthen the system, they maintained.

However, it appears that the policy makers had not taken all the necessary steps to eliminate overenumeration of the kind that has forced a postponement of the whole exercise. For example, no provision was made for recording the National Identity Card number of all or, at least, of the head of the family. That would have been the fool-proof method to check false information. Census rules also did not provide for obtaining the signature or thumb impression of the respondent on the forms prescribed for House Listing and the Big Count therefore,

the respondent had no legal responsibility for the contents thereof. In the absence of signature-thumb impression of the respondent, it was not possible to check information supplied by an irresponsible enumerator and punish him for dereliction of duty.

Authenticity and reliability of census largely depend on the enumerator and the respondent. In the present situation, political prejudices are likely factors to have affected both, with corresponding effects on the results as neither the respondent nor the enumerator was sufficiently bound down. The planners seem to have left everything to the good sense and honesty of the respondents, on the one hand, and the conscience of the enumerator, on other.

Notwithstanding the postponement of the census, it may be relevant to analyze it from other angles also.

The success of a census depends on the range and scope of the questionnaire. The present exercise did not attempt to find the number of women actually working in homes, in factories, in offices and establishments or on farms. Their contribution to the national economy would thus go unrecorded.

The other deficiency was the absence of classification of people as temporary, quasi-permanent, and permanent residents at a given place/distinct at the time of census. Such a classification is vitally important for major urban centers like Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta, Faisalabad and Hyderabad which are witnessing a tremendous influx of population from other parts of the country.

In the absence of any provision for recording the National Identity Card number of the respondents, Census-91 would have failed to isolate the population of illegal immigrants in the country. Presence of illegal immigrants affects national security and this point should not have been ignored. The census questionnaire had relied on a simple 'yes' or 'no' to ascertain whether the respondents were Pakistani nationals or not. Will an illegal immigrant tell the truth?

Postponement Announced

91AS0655D Karachi DAWN in English 22 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 21: The federal government on Thursday indefinitely postponed the population and housing census, scheduled from March 1 to 10, after it had turned into an explosive issue that could blow up the urban-rural harmony in Sindh.

An official announcement said a "fresh schedule would be announced after enactment of an appropriate legal framework for which action has already been initiated".

But informed sources said the initial results of the housing census had caused the alarm bells to ring as population growth in Sindh was "outlandish", at places skyrocketing by 770 percent.

Political circles were predicting a political storm as the population of interior of Sindh had shown an increase of over 300 percent on average, while in urban areas it had shot up by 112 percent in 10 years.

The MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] had raised serious objections to the exaggeration of figures in the interior of Sindh and had called it unacceptable because it would have tilted the balance in favor of the rural areas from the present 60:40 to 80:20.

The MQM had also demanded that if the census were not postponed, a third force and a neutral body should supervise it so that no one could exaggerate the figures to the detriment of others.

While the population of Punjab grew by only 45 percent in 10 years, the population of Sindh appeared to have increased from 19 million in 1981 to 51.6 million in 1991.

The official announcement said the postponement had been made "due to unforeseeable difficulties in having the Census (Amendment) Ordinance, 1990 passed by both Houses of Parliament by Feb 28, when the Ordinance expires".

But sources pointed out that the Senate had recently been in session for several weeks and had hardly any agenda. If the Government wanted to get the Bill passed, it would have taken two days as the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] has an enormous majority.

Likewise, the National Assembly is currently in session and with the majority IJI has, passage of any non-controversial Bill like the Census Ordinance would not have been any problem.

"If they had done it, the ruling party would have been split because the MQM would never have allowed the census to go through and this would have caused serious repercussions for the Jam Sadiq Government in Sindh," a political analyst said.

SRI LANKA

Mahaweli River Diversion Program Lauded

91AS0702B Colombo THE ISLAND in English
6 Mar 91 p 8

[Article: "A Worthy Celebration"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] If there are anniversary celebrations worthy of the blowing of conch shells, the beat of 'Hewisi' bands and the dance of lissome girls, it should surely be one connected with the exploitation of the resources of the Mahaweli River.

Thus, the events now being held to mark the twenty-first anniversary of the Mahaweli Diversion Programme is indeed of great relevance to the people of Sri Lanka.

It is the project which has brought tangible benefits to the people of this country.

The hundreds of Mega Watts now feeding the national grid, the thousands of acres of jungle land brought under paddy and other subsidiary food crops in addition to the homesteads created for hundreds and thousands of landless people have been the rich bounty of this project.

The heroes of the Mahaveli are many. Commencing from the Father of the Nation, Don Stephen Senanayake there are unforgettable names such as Dudley Senanayake, C.P. de Silva, Maithripala Senanayake, J.R. Jayewardene and Gamini Dissanayake. Their achievements should not be measured only in physical terms such as the size of reservoirs or amount of power generated. They had the vision and determination to go ahead despite bitter criticism, at times from well intentioned critics, who thought that far too much of investments were being made whereas other projects of smaller magnitude could have been realised. Whatever the validity of these contentions may be the Mahaveli today is a national treasure worthy of celebrations and of which the nation is proud of.

Editorial: Tribute to Assassinated Defense Minister

91AS0702A Colombo *THE ISLAND* in English
6 Mar 91 p 8

[Editorial: "Ranjan Wijeratne"]

[Text] The nation today pays tribute to Mr. Ranjan Wijeratne who during his brief political career held the centerstage and played a key role in determining the cataclysmic events that took place in the past few years. The political life span of Mr. Wijeratne was short and despite the role he played, it will not be possible to assess his contribution in determining the trends of history. However, there is little doubt that he will be remembered

as a key figure who restored law and order at a point of time when the country was on the brink of anarchy.

He was, without doubt, an extremely controversial politician, far removed from the traditional types of Sri Lankan leaders. He was a tea planter of British colonial tradition and retained very much of it. He had little difficulty in getting over the complexities and nuances of political ideologies. He spoke simply and directly and at times was quite brash and arrogant in contrast with the sophistry and equivocality of traditional politicians.

Nevertheless, he retained the sterling qualities associated with British planters: honesty, fearlessness, capacity for hard work and plain speaking, all of which were appreciated by, even his opponents.

The messages of condolence received from around the globe all speak of these striking characteristics of this mercurial character.

As Minister of State for Defence, his main task was to deal with the armed forces.

Officers of the security forces found in him a very compatible politician to work with.

Fighting civil insurrections and giving leadership is certainly a very unenviable task. In his period in office, he generated tremendous loyalties among the armed services. Among the public there were those who admired him tremendously but there were others who were vehemently opposed and bitterly critical of him.

Mr. Wijeratne's death occurred one and a half years after the JVP [People's Liberation Front] insurrection was crushed. He was directing operations against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] insurrection at the time of his death. Only when the flames of war flicker away and peace is restored that a rational assessment of this man who entered politics to fill in the vacancy of his predecessor who was felled by a bullet and died in a similar way can be assessed.

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